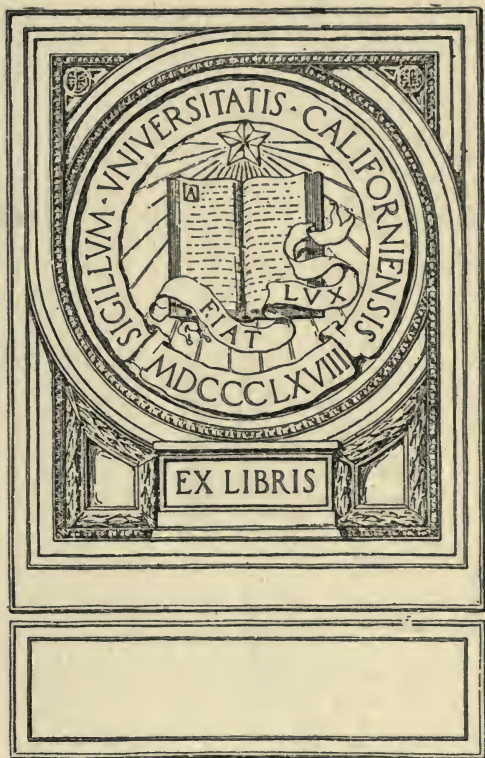




STUDIES IN HISTORY ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC LAW

EDITED BY
THE FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

VOLUME ONE HUNDRED

New York
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO., AGENTS
LONDON: P. S. KING & SON, LTD.

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**BRITISH POLICY AND OPINION DURING
THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR**

STUDIES IN HISTORY, ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC LAW

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Volume C]

[Number 1

Whole Number 227

**BRITISH POLICY AND OPINION DURING
THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR**

BY

DORA NEILL RAYMOND, Ph.D.

*Sometime University Fellow at the University of Texas
and Schiff Fellow in Political Science
at Columbia University*



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1921

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BY

DORA NEILL RAYMOND

To

MY FATHER

WHOM IT USED TO PLEASE TO SAY, "TOGETHER SOME DAY WE WILL
WRITE A HISTORY," I DEDICATE, WITH DEEP AFFECTION, THIS

DISSERTATION ON A SINGLE PHASE OF A GREAT WAR

HENRY HART NEILL, B. A., LL.D.

1848-1911

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FOREWORD

THIS study is the development of a master's thesis written at the University of Texas under Professor Thad Weed Riker. The author takes this opportunity of thanking him for his help at that time and for his suggestion of a subject that has afforded her sustained interest and enjoyment. She wishes to acknowledge very gratefully the assistance of Professor Charles Downer Hazen, under whose guidance the research was conducted for two years at Columbia. Through his introduction she was enabled to use the very excellent collection of British periodicals and newspapers in the Boston Athenaeum and was incidentally given the pleasure of working in the most delightful library it has been her privilege to enter. The burden of proof reading has fallen to Professor Carlton Hayes, whose skillful care in this particular the author much appreciates.

Though examination has been made of the files of the New York and the Boston Public Libraries, the Library of Congress, and the Libraries of Columbia, Harvard, and the University of Texas, the author is aware that much interesting material on the subject remains untouched across the Atlantic. That valuable collection of extracts from the British press which is entitled *Public Opinion* has been extensively drawn upon to supply the lack of papers not available in this country. Biographies and memoirs of the period are constantly making their appearance and, barring the adoption of the loose-leaf system of certain encyclopaedias, it would not be possible, even in England, to make the work definitive.

Finally, the author wishes very sincerely to thank Professor William Archibald Dunning for having permitted her to write the dissertation under his supervision after Professor Hazen had been called to Strasburg. Professor Dunning's marginal comments and annotations have been so interesting, and, at times, so humorous that she regrets that it is not permissible to retain them with the text. The unconscious criticism that has been supplied by the superiority of his own work cannot be so erased and the author hopes she may still profit by it.

INTRODUCTION

ENGLAND, 1870

ENGLAND, in the summer of 1870, may be described not inaptly by phrases which at that time might have described her Queen,—a lady who had attained to that age when comfort is more to be esteemed than glory, and the quiet of Balmoral to any royal progress, even though it emulate the French Eugénie's journeyings in Egypt. A lady, however, not to be pitied or ignored,—one who caused her physician small anxiety and was herself undismayed by any vaporous fears of age or death. There was, too, a dignity about her that commanded respect,—the respect accorded to power which has been used greatly in times past and may again be used on provocation. The Queen, it was said, might sometimes be unmindful of the talk about her, but she was found to be alert always to whatever had to do with her brother, the Duke of Coburg; her cousin, King of Hanover; her uncle, Leopold of Belgium; her daughter, the Crown Princess of Prussia, her daughter-in-law, the erstwhile Princess of Denmark; and most of all, her son, who was to rule dominions on the Seven Seas. Victoria, then, might choose to ride behind plump ponies in the low-swung carriage that bears her name, but diplomatists and their masters could not forget that the drowsy widow under the tilted little sunshade was a queen and that the sunshade could be discarded for a sceptre.

England, be it said, was like her Queen,—plump, and pacific, yet powerful withal. In this summer of 1870, her policy was controlled by disciples of the Manchester School: gentlemen who preferred congresses to wars, and rejoiced

more at the conclusion of a commercial treaty or a guarantee of free trade than the acquisition of new territory. The days of "bluster and blunder" were believed to be well passed. Palmerston had died five years before, and Russell was in retirement. Reduction in armament was operating very favorably on the budget. A cotton market gone astray had come to be as much a matter of concern as a stray Britisher, clamorous of his citizenship. That echo of the Government, the *Times*, once called the "Thunderer," had donned slippers and dressing jacket and become querulous and homiletic.

First of her public men was Gladstone, who for two years had been prime minister. Very much interested in the difficulties of Ireland was Gladstone. One of his greatest qualities, the only one in which he claimed to excel his rivals, was concentration. When it is considered that his interest was already deeply engaged elsewhere and that in character and manner he was wholly antithetic to his French neighbours, it may be understood how it happens that in his excellent biography in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* no mention is made of the war which during his premiership was waged beyond the "streak of silver sea,"—a great war whose issue was of vast importance to England.

His Foreign Secretary was the patient, and polite, and very pliant, Lord Granville. This Lord Granville spoke French like a Parisian. He could appreciate French wit and treasure a *bon mot* so carefully that it would lose nothing of its gallic sparkle when it reappeared in an after-dinner speech. But the French of that radical young advocate, Gambetta, left him cold. Nor can one fancy that the splendid verve of the *Song of Roland* would have been to him a compensation for its gory frightfulness. He has been called the great pacificator of politics. Men said, in the winter of 1870, that he led England through the valley of humiliation that he might gain that title.

Perhaps the most powerful personality in the Cabinet was that of the Quaker, John Bright. He was in ill-health at this time and absented himself from most of the meetings but he wielded, none the less, a strong influence over his associates. For many years he had been consistently favorable towards France, believing as he did that Napoleon's friendship for England was the one "fixed point in his otherwise erratic schemes." He rejoiced at the renewal of the Commercial Treaty between the two countries; wrote an occasional strong letter to Gladstone or Granville when he feared they might swerve from neutrality; disregarded the critical press that urged his retirement; took his medicines regularly; and when the war was over and done with could boast, as did the Abbé Siéyès after a more turbulent epoch, that he had lived.

Robert Lowe was Chancellor of the Exchequer. In a "Cabinet of Reform and Retrenchment" his business was to see that hostility to the former was balanced by gratitude for the latter. Reductions in the Navy had greatly assisted him in the preparation of a popular budget. It needed only peace to justify a continuation of his work. Messrs. Cardwell and Childers were respectively War Secretary and First Lord of the Admiralty. At this time these positions were regarded as secondary and no extensive inquiry had been made as to these gentlemen's ability to fill them.

Disraeli was the leader of the Opposition. He had not yet found himself, and was regarded as a weather cock by those Conservatives who could not understand how he had followed Bright in his desire for reduced naval armaments and, for the sake of office, embraced the Reform Bill of the Liberals. He, himself, was somewhat sceptical of the wisdom of his course in those proceedings and yet reluctant to be completely out of gear with the well-jointed times. He did not wish to be classed with the brilliant Sir Henry Bulwer.

Good European that Sir Henry was, and servant of Great Britain in the days of Palmerston and Russell, it was believed that he did not know a hawk from a handsaw where commercial interests were involved. The young men even of his own party looked upon him as a superannuated diplomat. Of his pattern, too, was Sir Robert Morier whose finest days were yet to come. He was ripe now for his high destiny, but he found himself a *chargé d'affaires* at Darmstadt while his country was served in the Continental capitals by men, who, though his inferiors in diplomacy, were regarded by the home Government as of sterling safety. In Paris there was that punctilious bachelor, Lord Lyons; in Madrid, Mr. Layard, the envoy extraordinary, dreamed of Babylon and Nineveh, while Prim and the agents of Bismarck conspired to place a Hohenzollern on the Spanish throne; Lord Augustus Loftus showed himself more alert at Berlin; but in St. Petersburg, Sir Andrew Buchanan could be disregarded with impunity.

Quite outside the pale of officialdom, and yet still vividly associated in the memory of his contemporaries with British foreign policy, was that old attaché of Stratford Canning's, and most picturesque of diplomats, David Urquhart. He was still thundering against Russia and urging the sedulous study of international law. Absolutely and proudly opposed to the current of his time, he sought to redirect it in the *Diplomatic Review*, a periodical so scholarly and of a bias so vigorous and pronounced as to make it a thing unique of its kind. But "Urquhartism" was dying. The talents of the editor, reinforced by contributions from Karl Marx and a small group of followers, could not save the slim review from dropping from a monthly to a quarterly, supported by a steadily dwindling list of survivors. Those who could understand its style were those most certain to poohpooh its ideas. Urquhart, they said, was a good sort

to have introduced the Turkish bath into England, but Jove, man, the fellow had gone to seed utterly with his eternal drivel against Russia and his harpings on the courtesies of nations. He was "touched."

Much more intelligible, though also somewhat unBritish in its viewpoint, was that group of Oxford men that had followed the teachings of Auguste Comte. The Positivists had a disconcerting way of analysing governmental policies not on the basis of their effect on the industry of Manchester, and Leeds, and Birmingham, but of their effect on the populace as a whole. They were felt to be dangerous. Professor Beesly, with his reputation for scholarly attainment, could not be denied a hearing. The eloquent young Frederic Harrison made an opponent even more alarming. The whole school showed a disconcerting tendency to affiliate with the working men, and to dignify by their approbation the speeches of George Odger and others whom the press was in the habit of deriding. It was believed that they might even have some ideas in common with that atheistical young republican, Charles Bradlaugh.

Others there were in the cast,—“lords, ladies, and attendants,”—to say nothing of the mob, which though it be kept off stage ever so successfully for most of the evening has a way, when once it gains the boards, of diverting either tragedy or comedy from its own proper ending. To speak severally of the supernumeraries would be to name many who in other dramas have a higher place. But here they can be grouped together as having exercised no very appreciable influence on the formation of policy or opinion at the time we are to describe.

Certainly, that doughty Scotchman, Thomas Carlyle, would cavil at seeing his name in pica. But so it deserves to be, if only as retribution for his own faults of classification. For he ranged all humankind into two columns. Man

was either exalted as a hero or impaled as a knave,—a method not so convincing as it was simple. The public tired of Carlylogiums on Prussia, Bismarck, and the brave and pious German soldier.

Other more worthy historians, somewhat too busy writing history to help to make it, were the gentle, humorous John Richard Green; that staunch admirer of things German, Freeman; the stately Lord Acton; and Sir Alexander Malet, late Minister Plenipotenitiary at Frankfort, whose recently published history, had it been widely and immediately read, would have well prepared the British for what was to come. Ruskin philosophized on the enchained sequence of events; John Stuart Mill set forth his ideas on the worth and durability of treaties; the poets, Browning and Buchanan, tested their powers at analyzing the character of the third Napoleon; Swinburne celebrated the new Republic in an ode of “a thousand lines and not a single idea.” A host of eager young war correspondents sent back reports all hot from camp and field. And John Morley and other of the reviewers strove to boil all down to a potable draught of wisdom for the quarterlies.

The shifting, multicolored mob flocked to the Alhambra to hear the *Marseillaise*; and to the wax works of Madame Tussaud, where Bismarck frowned in effigy; it lit its torches under Nelson’s monument and gathered in Hyde Park, and all the sainted halls of London, to resolve and demonstrate. We must not linger so long in Downing Street and at the news stalls and print shops, that we miss the flare of torches through the fog, the sight of bobbing Phrygian caps and upflung arms, the raucous sound of voices hoarsened by night shouting. Nothing must be lost if we are to know of that public opinion, which Huxley called the chaos of popular prejudice.

CHAPTER I

BRITISH RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND PRUSSIA, 1860-1870

ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS FROM 1860 TO 1870

To appreciate the viewpoint the Islanders had of the events of the War of 1870, it is necessary to see them against the background of the past relationships of Great Britain with the two belligerents. For past events as well as future have the character of contributing to the chiaroscuro of the present. It was no single act of the French Emperor, be sure, that caused the calm Poet Laureate to shake his long ambrosial locks and exclaim as pettishly as any young subaltern: ¹

“True that we have got such a faithful ally,
That only the devil can tell what he means.”

And that made his apprehensions to be so generally shared by his fellows.

Although, during the decade preceding the Franco-Prussian War, England often acted in conjunction with her old ally of the Crimea, her attitude toward the foreign policy of France was always distrustful. This was not unnatural when it is remembered that the period opens on the Emperor's acquisition of Nice and Savoy,—an aggravating coda to a treaty which even the moderate friends of Italy had adjudged unsatisfactory, almost treacherous. Though Napoleon III had acquiesced in Lord John Russell's famous

¹ Alfred Tennyson, *The Works of* (Hallam edition, N. Y., 1916); *Riflemen Form*, p. 866.

dispatch of January 17, 1860, thereby giving pledge not to intervene in Italian affairs by force of arms nor to lengthen unduly the occupation of Rome by his soldiery,¹ dissatisfaction in England was still keen. The London *Times* described the Emperor as "universally declared to be a man without loyalty or good faith."² It cautioned the neighbors of France to extreme watchfulness. On the occasion of his meeting with the German rulers at Baden Baden, it described his arrival as the entrance of a sportsman into a well stocked preserve. The "bustling birds" were warned that he came, probably, to bag the Palatinate, which he desired for the "rectification" of his boundary.³ His proposed occupation of Chablis and Faucigny, the Swiss districts of Savoy, was declared to be inspired not so much by a wish for territory as for the securing of a passageway for his armies into neutralized Switzerland.⁴ Prussia was urged to assume leadership: to compose her internal differences, to put money in her purse, and to increase her army.⁵ More, the *Times* suggested that that sense of security felt by France from her gain of two provinces separated from her by the highest mountains, might well dispose Prussia to attempt to gain two provinces separated from German territory by one of the widest rivers in Europe.⁶ Small wonder that the *Moniteur* protested at the nervous shiverings of the neighbours of France,—among whom she included England.⁷

It was matter for rejoicing to Gladstone that the Com-

¹ Fitzmaurice, Edmond George Petty, *Life of Lord Granville* (London, 1905), vol. i, pp. 368-369.

² The *Times*, London, Apr. 3, 1860.

³ *Ibid.*, June 16, 1860.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 17, 1860.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Apr. 4, 6, 13, May 5, 1860.

⁶ *Ibid.*, June 2, 1860.

⁷ *Ibid.*, June 2, 1860.

mercial treaty, concluded with France that year, served as a check to "needless alarms and fancies," to "tendencies towards convulsion and confusion."¹ John Bright and certain other members of the House of Commons burned for a further application of the principles of the Manchester School. They urged a concert with the French Government for the mutual reduction of the British and French navies. But against this the opposition of Palmerston was insurmountable.

In 1861 Great Britain associated herself with France and Spain in a joint invasion of Mexico for the collection of debts due their subjects. But in the next year she withdrew from the expedition and further showed her divergence from the Emperor's American policy by refusing to support his offer of mediation between the Federals and Confederates.² Her decision was justified by the future.

Not so sound was the rejection of coöperation in the matter of intervening in Polish affairs. In 1863, the conscription by the Russian viceroy of two thousand young Poles was believed by Napoleon III to justify the calling of a congress for a consideration of the entire question. The British government chose to content itself, and to discontent Russia, by giving platonic and ineffectual advice to that Government, the while Prussia won the Tsar by an attitude of cordial sympathy.³ Queen Victoria's fear that Napoleon intended, through an alliance with Austria and the aid of Italian armies, to resuscitate Poland by dissecting Prussia, quite overwhelmed her discretion.⁴ Not only was Russian

¹ John Morley, *Life of Wm. Ewart Gladstone* (N. Y., 1911), vol. i, p. 638.

² *Annual Register*, 1863, vol. cv, pp. 4, 7, 9, 125, 308-309.

³ J. A. R. Marriott, *England Since Waterloo* (London, 1911), p. 321; Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 446-447.

⁴ Disraeli to Mrs. Bridges Williams, W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (N. Y., 1910-1920), vol. iv, p. 340.

hostility incurred but the good understanding with France was diminished. It would still further have dwindled, had the French Emperor known that those English statesmen, who had dissociated themselves from his disastrous Mexican policy, were gloating at difficulties which they believed would save Belgium and the Palatinate from his rapacity. The Manchester group, however, still showed themselves friendly and arranged to coöperate with him in measures concerning the cotton question.¹

In 1864 the tables were turned. The matter of the disposal of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein was a nearer concern of England than of France, though the latter was equally associated with her and the other five Powers that had guaranteed the King of Denmark in their possession by the London Protocol. Palmerston and Russell,—always proponents of the “strong policy,”—were willing to go any lengths to preserve the strategically important duchies from falling under the dominance of Austria or Prussia. Napoleon, still embroiled in Mexico, would resort to nothing more drastic than a congress,—which it was found impossible to assemble.² The Conference, convened in London, after the fortune of the war was already decided, had no positive effect on the fate of the duchies. But the admission during its sessions that England was without allies and unable to act alone had the negative effect of lowering British prestige abroad and the influence of the Ministry at home.³ The creation by France of a friendly ally in Mexico for the Confederacy, thought Lord John Russell, might so strengthen the South as to make a Federal invasion of

¹ Sir Thos. Newton, *Lord Lyons, A Record of British Diplomacy* (N. Y., 1913), vol. i, pp. 115-116.

² Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 450-472; Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, pp. 343-345.

³ Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 346.

Canada impracticable.¹ But this was but a shred of comfort for the loss of the strong European ally then so greatly needed.

In 1866 France was allowed the empty honor of assisting in negotiating a truce that led to the treaty ending the war of Austria and Prussia,—a treaty which gave notice to the world that France had lost in Mexico the hegemony of Europe. Impotence to direct on the Continent was more galling than the undisguised defeat abroad. The many British who looked on the French Emperor as a theatrical manager, holding his place only through his ability to stage a striking success at more or less regular intervals, were a-tiptoe to see with what new piece his people were to be regaled, and very sure that the performance would be one to merit censure. Belgium, Luxemburg, and Rhenish Bavaria were each rumored to be the intended victims of the tragedy, and not without reason. Some one of these, it was believed, had surely been held out as bait to ensure French neutrality during the recent war. The bristling questions were which, and how and when France was to make the acquisition. Publicly, her policy was blameless. In August of 1866, Napoleon declared, in a letter meant not alone for the recipient, that the true interest of France was not the acquisition of territory but rather the giving of such assistance to Germany as would enable her to constitute herself after a fashion favorable to French and European interests.² The letter failed of its purpose. Disquieting rumours of intrigue continued, and on the last day of the year we find Disraeli uneasy over a proposition, said to have emanated from Bismarck and found favor in the French ministry, that France acquire Belgium as the *quid pro quo* of allowing Prussia to absorb the states of south Germany.³

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 133.

² Benedetti, *Ma Mission en Prusse* (London, 1913), p. 182.

³ Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 69.

England, however, kept the distrust of the French foreign policy well localized and, while keeping a crowded eye on her possible intrigue in Central Europe, coöperated with her in the East to secure Turkey's recognition of a Hohenzollern prince as hereditary ruler of the new Rumania.¹ She was temperate, too, in her remonstrance at the new French garrison which occupied Rome after the attack of the Italian volunteers.² Prussia, who was not so, would have laid the onus of discontent on England but Napoleon was not deceived and showed no ill will toward his old ally.³

It was something of a relief to the turbid situation when a plan for French compensation came to the surface and could be officially discussed. In April of 1867, the King of the Netherlands was found to have given a contingent consent to Napoleon's purchase from him of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. His consent was qualified because the possession of the duchy had been guaranteed to him in 1839 by the Great Powers and their acquiescence was necessary for its disposal.⁴ Russia expressed her willingness to the transfer, —bought, England believed, by the French proposal to hasten the dissolution of Turkey by a cession of Crete to Greece.⁵ The matter in its entirety was displeasing to England. She had no wish to see Belgium become a French enclave nor to see Russia advance even indirectly toward Constantinople. Prussia also expressed emphatic disapproval of the proposed purchase by France of Luxemburg. She made her disapproval more noteworthy by re-

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 153-156.

² Lyons to Stanley, Paris, Jan. 16, 1868, *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 186.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 183-184.

⁴ Stanley to Lyons, London, Apr. 4, 1867, *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 168; Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, pp. 469-471; Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 168.

⁵ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 163-170, 180, 209.

vealing at the same time the defensive military treaties she had made with the South German States at the close of the late war. The matter was settled at a conference of the great Powers in London. France, though absolutely denied the acquisition of Luxemburg, seems to have left the Conference with greater satisfaction than either Prussia or England,—a fact which would make it appear that it was not so much territory as a preservation of prestige and a guarantee against further Prussian encroachments that she desired. To Victoria and certain of the English diplomats the collective guarantee accorded the neutrality of Luxemburg seemed not so strong as circumstance might demand. It was believed France would be aggressive and disposed to violate international agreements and an unequivocal attitude of Great Britain in such a contingency was needed as a deterrent.¹ Prussia was unhappy at being obliged to remove her garrisons and at having to sign a treaty with France instead of against her. A solution by war might have proven more favorable. She was well prepared and she knew that her rival was not.² It was something, however, for Prussian satisfaction to have drawn from France in the early stage of the negotiations, the admission that the question of possessing Luxemburg involved the existence of the Napoleonic dynasty. The London Conference and its deference to French *amour propre* had modified the failure of the Emperor's project. But a state whose dynasty could survive a rebuff only by the assistance of a European congress, was temptingly vulnerable.

England, too, was apprized of the weakness of the nation which she had been regarding as a bogey. The French Ambassador told his British confrère in Berlin that the reason France could not permit the formation of a German

¹ Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 472.

² Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 169.

Empire was that it would make the position of the Emperor untenable.¹ The British Ambassador in Paris was assured by the Foreign Minister, who spoke with even more authority, that it was not aggrandizement France wished but security for the future.² France, it would appear, would misbehave only if she were frightened, and the task of England was either to preserve the *status quo* or to convince France that a united Germany would oppose no real danger to her freedom and prestige. The compliance of the present attitude of France was encouraging. She had accepted the decision of the London Conference with real happiness, and according to the Emperor, who had been looked on as the chief offender in the matter, was eager to settle the Roman question also by conference.³

When in the next year, 1868, France was alarmed at the rumour that Prussia was on the point of annexing the Grand Duchy of Baden, she turned again to England. She would have had her advise Prussia of the disfavor with which such a step would be regarded in Paris. The attitude of France was that any annexation of territory south of the Main would be as much an act of aggression and conquest on the part of Prussia as on her own part. England refused to give the desired advice to Prussia, but France on this special point received reassurance from Prince Napoleon after his visit to Berlin in the spring. The Prince reported that there was no present intention of increasing the area of the North German Confederacy by annexation but that the principle was one Prussia was prepared to maintain. He reported, also, that nowhere else, save in the United States, were foreign governments held in such indifference. Prussia, he

¹ Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 319.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 320.

³ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 178-180.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 194-196.

said, was fast carrying out her plans and war, were it to be made, should be declared this year or not at all.¹ Lord Lyons, however, informed his Government that he believed the Emperor was sincerely anxious to preserve peace.² His opinion seems to have been justified, for the critical period was allowed to elapse.

With the New Year, there came a recrudescence of alarm in England. In January the King of Belgium, in a letter to Victoria, expressed a fear that France, by a customs convention or by purchase through a French company of the Luxemburg railway, would attempt to gain a footing in Belgium. He was at once assured by the Queen that any proceedings which seemed to threaten the independence or integrity of Belgium would bring England at once into the field.³ At this time the Prussian ambassador in London (von Bernstorff) thought it opportune to inform Gladstone and Clarendon that, though his Government was not willing to defend Belgium single-handed, it would willingly make terms with England to join in her defense.⁴ At a later time Bismarck reverted to this episode and assured Clarendon that it was only this offer of support and the disapproval of a single French minister that had prevented an occupation of Belgium from taking place.¹ However real the danger may have been, England, it seems, did not think it necessary to contract the alliance. In view of the existing guarantee of neutrality to which France was signatory and the officially correct attitude of her Government, such an effort at reinsurance on England's part would certainly have been regarded as a slap in the face. Belgium was more affected by the Prussian warning, and passed an act to for-

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 192-193.

² Lyons to Stanley, Paris, March 27, 1868, *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 192.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 211-213.

⁴ Clarendon to Lyons, Apr. 19, 1868, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 218.

bid the granting of concessions to railroads without governmental consent.¹ The act was regarded in France as having been instigated by Bismarck. M. de Lavalette declared that after this it would be impossible for the French Government to have any friendship for the Belgian Ministry.² No hostility was shown toward the attitude of England in the matter, since the Queen's declaration had been merely a reassertion of her already avowed policy, and was made not to the Emperor but to the uneasy king of the neutral country.

It remains to speak of another railway which was the subject of debate in the French Chamber a month before the war's outbreak. This road, which the Swiss designed to traverse their republic and pierce the Alps by the St. Gothard Pass, had been promised subsidies by Prussia, Baden, and Italy, to whom it would afford communication.³ The Opposition, led by Jules Ferry, made an attempt to discredit the Ministry by declaring the project a menace to France. The Minister of Foreign Affairs replied that the Government was perfectly at ease in the matter: Switzerland had given repeated assurance that she would maintain her neutrality, and by the convention of Berne foreign troops were barred from transport.⁴ It was an attitude that must have delighted the British Ministry,—adhering as they did to the Manchester tenets and regarding railways from the standpoint rather of commerce than of strategy. The debate was satisfactory, also, in having given the Ministry an opportunity to allay any suspicion that France was meditating revenge on Prussia. M. Jules Ferry had been called

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 211.

² Lyons to Clarendon, Paris, Feb. 16, 1869, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 214.

³ *Times*, June 15th and 16th, 1870; *Spectator*, June 18, 1870.

⁴ *Times*, June 21, 1870; *Manchester Guardian*, June 22, 1870.

to order when he attacked the Government for having permitted Sadowa. The Duc de Gramont, with the explicit approval of Napoleon, had embraced the opportunity to declare that the peace of Europe was never more assured.¹ Surely, when the leader of the constitutional majority in France showed himself to be pacific and received the congratulations of the Emperor for so doing, the danger of a *coup* in foreign affairs could be pronounced illusory.

ANGLO PRUSSIAN RELATIONS FROM 1860 TO 1870

In strong contrast to the distrust meted out to France by Great Britain in 1860 was the encouraging and almost maternal regard she showed toward the evolution of Germany. She was eager for its speedy unification.

The belief was, as the *Times* phrased it, that such a unification was very much to British interest, an object of great and immediate importance. Germany was regarded as "the natural friend of all who wish to hold in peace what they honestly possess and prudently use . . . the natural impediment of all who would convulse the world for the hope of gaining by confusion." England, said the *Times*, was in the position of a stout gentleman who knows that there are pickpockets near, and who sees the police quarrelling among themselves.² A great Central Power would do much to preserve that balance in the Continental system which was the anxious care of Great Britain. It would check the aggressions of both France and Russia and prevent the necessity of England's doing police duty to protect the smaller states. It was a matter of concern, of course, which of the Germanies should determine the character of the future Germany. In this regard British statesmen naturally looked to Prussia to assume the leadership. The mem-

¹ *Times*, June 22, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, Apr. 13, 1860.

ory of her part in the final defeat of Napoleon was still green. The beginning of the decade found her with a well filled exchequer, a military system of great potentiality and a government possessed, seemingly, of liberal tendencies. Baden, like Austria, had sacrificed the love of her people for the protection of the Ultramontane. Prussia had not made such a mistake and she had matched her tolerance in religious matters with a regard for constitutional forms well pleasing to the English. When, in 1860, the Bund sought to uphold the elector of Hesse Cassel in replacing the liberal constitution of 1831 with a more reactionary one, it was Prussia that had dissented.¹ Her minister declared that the question of the constitution of Electoral Hesse was the question of the constitution of Germany. Prussia, therefore, reserved the right to adhere to her point of view and pursue such a policy as her honor and power might demand.² England rejoiced at this manifestation of tendencies so like her own. The Prussian state, over which some day would reign a British princess, promised to be a congenial and valuable ally for the future. Already she was associating herself with England to prevent French aggression in the neutralized districts of Savoy.

In 1861 William was crowned King of Prussia, thereby bringing Victoria's daughter, the wife of Prince Frederick, within a step of the throne. The next year Bismarck was called to undertake the conduct of the Prussian Government. The importance of the latter event far outweighed that of the former. The liberal Germany of which Victoria and the Prince Consort had dreamed and which all England had been eager to welcome as an ally was not soon to come into being. British statesmen remembered that it was Bismarck,

¹ *Times*, Apr. 2nd and 3rd, 1860.

² *Ibid.*, Apr. 21, 1860.

who at the time of the Crimean War had successfully used his influence in preventing Prussia from associating herself with the Western Powers. He had made no secret of his hostility toward them nor of his wish for an alliance with Russia. M. de Moustier, the French Ambassador, had threatened that his conduct of Prussian policy would bring him to Jena. The retort was prompt and disconcerting. "Why not to Waterloo?" had said Bismarck.¹ Here was a diplomat to be reckoned with,—one who played the game with a boldness that seemed to scorn the finesse that really it concealed. He had been in London shortly before the King called him to power and had outlined his plans to Disraeli: "I shall soon be compelled to undertake the conduct of the Prussian Government. My first care will be to reorganize the army, with or without the help of the Landtag As soon as the army shall have been brought into such a condition as to inspire respect, I shall seize the first best pretext to declare war against Austria, dissolve the German Diet, subdue the minor states, and give national unity to Germany with Prussian leadership. I have come here to say this to the Queen's Ministers."²

Only strength of power or innocence of purpose could justify such an orgy of candor. The British, though they might approve the end in view, could not have been expected to approve the means Bismarck detailed for its accomplishment. It appeared, then, that this Prussian quite disregarded the matter of their opinion. "Take care of that man!" warned Disraeli, "He means what he says!"

"The first best pretext to declare war on Austria" being overlong in making its appearance, Bismarck, himself, set about creating it by a war, which with Austria as an ally, should result in a peace which would make Austria an op-

¹ George Hooper, *The Campaign of Sedan* (London, 1914).

² Monypenny and Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 341.

ponent in the division of the spoils. The more or less innocent victim of the tortuous proceeding was Denmark, whose duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were marked out as the spoils. It could not be expected that the quarrel would remain wholly a neighbourhood affair. Among the signatories that had confirmed, though not guaranteed, the King of Denmark in his administration of the Elbe duchies were France, Russia, and Great Britain. France, as we have seen, was at this time too deeply embroiled in Mexico to do more than try to assemble a congress. Russia was experiencing difficulties with the Poles and had been fortified by sympathy and even offers of assistance from Prussia. It was from Great Britain that Denmark expected assistance, not only because that country was more able to give it but because her interests were more nearly involved. Lord Palmerston believed it undeniable that at the base of the German design was the wish for a fleet, and a harbor for that fleet at Kiel.¹ The prospect of a naval rival in the Baltic, and perhaps elsewhere, was one to cause reflection. The Queen was interested in the matter more because it involved the principle of legitimacy, and because the Princess of Wales was the daughter of the King of Denmark. Victoria would have had the duchies awarded to their legitimate ruler and the King of Denmark compensated by a Swedish marriage, which, by uniting his kingdom with Norway and Sweden, would form a strong northern barrier against Russia.²

At first Great Britain took a high tone in the matter. Denmark, however, showed herself as stubborn to her friend as to her foes. Prussia was recalcitrant. Nothing could be done without her, said Lord Granville, "and she will never consent to anything which does not give her more

¹ Marriott, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

² Memorandum to Granville, Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 456.

preponderance than the Southern States will admit.”¹ It became apparent that British bluster would not suffice and it was not possible to bring more than that to bear. The warlike policy of Palmerston and Russell was not popular even in the Cabinet and was strongly opposed by the Queen. Nor were the British people eager to embark in a war without allies. But the Prime Minister had made a statement before Parliament that made retreat difficult. He had threatened that, were Denmark attacked, it would not be that country only with whom the aggressors would have to contend.² It was hard to sink from such an octave to the querulous half-tone of a conference. The nation was jarred with consciousness of the humiliating position into which she had been led by what Derby called Palmerston’s policy of “muddle and meddle.” Only the Lords saved the Ministry from going under.

A more important consequence was the distrust of Prussia caused by her secession from the London Protocol, and her acquisition of Lauenburg and the command of Kiel by the Gastein Convention. The Queen spoke for the nation when she informed Lord Granville of her wish that Prussia should at least be made aware of what she and her Government, and every honest man in Europe, must think of the unblushing violation of every assurance and pledge that had been given.³

In the ensuing quarrel between victorious Prussia and Austria that culminated in the Seven Week’s War of 1866, the Queen offered her mediation. Bismarck refused it brusquely.⁴ He had not manufactured his “pretext” for

¹ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 450.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 452.

³ General Gray to Granville, Aug. 24, 1864, Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 476.

⁴ Marriott, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

the purpose of seeing it dissolved. And so another war was waged without benefit of England. The provisions of the Peace of Prague greatly augmented the Queen's chagrin. She saw the extinction of the kingdom of her cousin of Hanover, the diminution of the powers of her son-in-law of Hesse, and the humiliation of her son's father-in-law of Denmark. For these visitations on her kin and her next to kin, the Queen blamed the lordly Bismarck.

This peace, regarded unfavorably in England and with hostility in France, was followed by a nervous period in which the British watched with narrowed eyes for some *coup* on the part of Napoleon to recompense him for Prussia's accessions. The air was somewhat clarified, as we have seen, when Great Britain by the sessions of the London Conference of 1867 contrived to send France away at once satisfied and empty-handed. After the fiasco of the Conference of 1864, she had been astonished at her own success. At Paris the feeling of gratitude to England was reported to be both general and strong.¹ The time seemed propitious for efforts which might result in something more than the elimination of a present difficulty. No one was better fitted for this delicate task of mediation than Lord Clarendon. More often than any other diplomat, he had represented his country in important negotiations and ceremonies abroad. He was familiar with the whole field of European diplomacy, and was regarded as a personal friend by the royal families of France, Spain, and Prussia. His devotion to pacific principles was sincere, but so discreet that he could be trusted to urge his views earnestly and even persistently but never fanatically nor obtrusively. He held no brief for either of the rival courts. Both were aware that his friendship for the one was matched by his friendship for the other.

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 169.

The interviews of 1868 with the King and Queen of Prussia, and General Moltke, were satisfactory in the assurance given Clarendon that Prussia would be careful not to give offence and very slow to take it. Even so, however, King William was not sure how long peace could be maintained. But he promised that, should war be precipitated, Prussia would so act as to make it manifest that France was the unprovoked aggressor.¹ No one could foresee when dynastic interests might induce Napoleon to resort to war in order to smother internal discontent. It was this uncertainty that kept the nations armed to the teeth. Napoleon listened to Clarendon's report of the interviews "with evident satisfaction." At its conclusion, he suggested a collective confirmation by Europe of the treaty of Prague. This would assure Prussia of her gains and do much to restore public confidence. A diminution of armaments would be a logical sequence. He would have had England take the initiative in summoning a congress for this purpose.²

It was apparent that the rulers of France and Prussia were not like-minded as to the cause of European unrest,—the one believing it a consequence of the distrust engendered by the latter's gains in her war with Austria, the other believing it a consequence of the uncertainty of the means the French Emperor might take to preserve his dynasty. But the divergence of their analysis was not alarming if both were sincere in the desire they expressed for peace. A subsequent interview with the Prussian Crown Prince afforded Clarendon even more encouragement. Frederick William was eager to see his country's army reduced to something more like a peace footing. He believed that in a year or so his father would be forced to such a reduction by discontent at the burden of taxation.³

¹ Lyons to Stanley, Oct. 13, 1868, *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 202, 203.

² Lyons to Stanley, Oct. 20, 1868, *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 204-205.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 208-209.

In France the need to placate the voters by disarmament was very strong by 1870. Three years before, Napoleon had told Bismarck, according to the latter's account, that there were but two courses open to him: war or the granting of more internal liberty.¹ In January of 1870, Napoleon called Ollivier to power and from that time on the drift was toward a parliamentary form of government. It was a necessary corollary that an effort should be made toward disarmament. To prevent power from falling into the hands of the urban socialists, the agricultural population had to be won over by a diminished call for recruits. Before the expiration of the first month of its existence, the Ollivier Ministry, with the Emperor's consent, approached England in the hope of gaining through her a confidential agreement with Prussia on disarmament. It was necessary that the negotiations be conducted secretly, for France, having lately suffered a loss of prestige, could not brave a rebuff.²

Lord Clarendon accepted the task and in a letter laid the proposition informally before Bismarck. The Chancellor gave it no encouragement. He reminded the Englishman of his country's position between the great military powers,—any two of which might ally themselves against her; he reverted to French aggression in times past; hinted at her present hunger for rectifications, and the aid that an armed Prussia might be to England were those desires to lead to sins against Belgium. It would be impossible, said Bismarck, to modify a military system so deeply rooted in the traditions of his country. He dared not even mention the matter to the King, who would regard the proposal, were it made by France, as a ruse, and, were it made by England, as the act of a poor friend. He begged, also, that Clarendon

¹ Loftus to Clarendon, Feb. 5, 1870, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 255.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 245.

say nothing of the matter at Paris since the refusal if known there would make things dangerous.¹

The negotiations, so inauspiciously begun in February, were continued into March, but at no time did the Chancellor swerve from his attitude of negation. His arguments made an unpleasant impression on the British statesmen. They believed the danger he alleged from France to be illusory. Gladstone was vexed that he so ignored the Ministry's reduction in the naval estimates as to point his finger at Great Britain as a fellow believer in large armaments.² Clarendon thought him hypocritical in his pretence that the King would be seriously offended at the proposal. For he knew that the King had actually said only a little while since that he would disarm if other Powers would do so.³ Lord Loftus, who was in personal communication with Bismarck at Berlin, advised that the negotiations be discontinued. Nothing more had been achieved than a promise that the question would be referred to Parliament in a year or so.⁴

The decision of the French Foreign Minister to persevere in his plan after having been apprized that he could hope for nothing similar from Prussia, made Bismarck's conduct appear yet more sinister.⁵ Clarendon, knowing of the reduction that had been planned and the disappointment that it must now, perforce, be limited, expressed his opinion of the failure of the negotiations very clearly. Some day that which he knew would be known by all, and then, he

¹ Loftus to Clarendon, Berlin, Feb. 5, 1870, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 254-256.

² Gladstone to Clarendon, Feb. 7th and Apr. 9th, 1870, Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 332.

³ Clarendon to Lyons, March 12, 1870, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 266.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 275.

⁵ Lyons to Clarendon, Feb. 11, 1870, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 258.

said, upon Prussia would rest the responsibility not only of maintaining so large a force herself, but of compelling other countries reluctantly to do the same.¹

On the 26th of May, the King, in closing the German Parliament, announced that the military organization of the Confederacy was at last complete, and "of an importance in harmony with the just demands of the German nation." One of the British papers suggested that this should have been spoken to the accompaniment of the softly played air, "Our freeborn German Rhine."²

Those diplomats who had been negotiating with Bismarck must have read the comment with something of approval.

In the second week of June, Lord Clarendon wrote to the British Ambassador at Paris of a meeting of the Tsar and the King of Prussia at Ems. He suspected that they occupied themselves with a discussion of a more complete unification of Germany,—beginning with the incorporation of Baden.³ It was one of his last acts of service to the British Foreign Office. His death occurred in this same month,—a time when of all others his ministrations were most needed.

It may have been only a brusque way of paying a compliment; it may have been a real admission of the superiority of the Englishman's diplomacy to his own strategy, that caused Bismarck to say to Clarendon's daughter, on a later visit to London: "Madam, nothing ever gave me so much pleasure as your father's death."⁴

¹ Clarendon to Loftus, March 9, 1870, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 270.

² *Spectator*, May 28, 1870.

³ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 293.

⁴ Lord Algernon Freeman-Mitford Redesdale, *Memories* (London, 1915), vol. ii, pp. 525-526.

CHAPTER II

FRANCE UNDER PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT

IN addressing the assembled Diplomatic Body on New Year's day of 1870, Napoleon III expressed his satisfaction at the "good relations existing between France and foreign powers," and announced his happiness at having arrived at that point where, like a tired traveller after a long journey, he could relieve himself of a portion of his burden and so gain fresh strength to continue his course.¹ Two days later he officially received his new premier, M. Ollivier, who was to conduct France from an autocratic to a constitutional régime.

The new Minister, it was believed in England, had been wisely chosen as one who would work with equal honesty to the people and devotion to the Empire. *Vanity Fair*, according him a place in its gallery of notables, depicted him as a black-garbed, pigeon-toed gentleman with an amiable expression, hands clasped in front of him. The serio-comic portrait ludicrously represented the British idea of his difficulties. He was to tend with equal care the business of his master, the Emperor, and his master, the Corps Législatif, the while he kept his own hands locked; one foot was to incline toward the imperial pathway and the other towards the broad highway of parliamentary responsibility. "The most useful and necessary qualities a politician can have," M. Ollivier was quoted as saying, "is a readiness to be considered foolish or vulgarly ambitious when that is calculated

¹ *Spectator*, Jan. 8, 1870.

to promote the success of a long meditated plan." The wish was expressed that, since the gentleman had already been adjudged both foolish and ambitious, he might now be successful.¹ Lord Lyons, though foreseeing difficulties with the extremists, wrote hopefully of the outlook, and reported that already the Empress, who had long been antagonistic, professed to see great good in parliamentary government.²

In the first two weeks of its existence, the new Ministry reaped golden opinions. Almost immediately, it had dismissed the extravagant but competent Baron Haussmann, who for seventeen years had labored at the rebuilding of Paris, and was a favorite with the Emperor; it had dismissed, also, some twenty "devoted" prefects, and served warning on the others not to interfere in elections. It had shown its liberal tendencies by passing measures to ensure the greater freedom of the press and by frankly and promptly answering its interpellators.³ England rejoiced at the renewal of the Commercial Treaty of 1860,⁴ and it might be hoped that Prussia felt satisfaction at the expressed wish of the French for a one-fourth reduction of the conscription.

But on the very day that the Corps Législatif had met to inaugurate the new Ministry, an event occurred which was provocative of great difficulty in the founding of a liberal and pacific empire. Prince Pierre Bonaparte shot to death the unarmed Victor Noir who brought to him a duelling challenge of M. Rochefort. It cannot be thought that so slight a thing,—the killing of an obscure journalist by a disinherited cousin of the Emperor,—was more than the spark that fired already smouldering embers. But the inciting

¹ *Vanity Fair*, Jan. 15, 1870. The serio-comic portrait of Ollivier is by "Ape" (Pellegrini).

² Newton, *Lord Lyons*, vol. i, pp. 244-245.

³ *Spectator*, Jan. 8th and 15th, 1870.

⁴ *Annual Register*, 1870, vol. cxii, p. 3.

brutality of the murder; the fervid eloquence of M. Rochefort (which he exerted in his paper, before the Belleville mob, and in the House of Deputies); and the bungling of the frightened police and the judiciary, all served to provoke to extremity the hatred of Paris for the existing régime. The fifty thousand, who accompanied the funeral cortege, would have taken the corpse to the City had not M. Rochefort,—himself alarmed at the tempest his eloquence had helped to raise,—dissuaded them from the attempt. On the arrest of M. Rochefort, the excitement was greatly heightened. There was rioting for three nights in Paris: erection of barricades, the proclamation of a republic, cries of death and destruction to the Bonapartes,—all the well known harbingers of a change of government in France. On this occasion, however, the Empire had no difficulty in maintaining itself. But it had glimpsed the awful hatred of those to whom it was extending liberty and some degree of power, and drew back, frightened. It had been made to resort to the old paraphernalia of imperialism: seizure of papers, arrest of their editors, the ranging of the military against the populace. And once the pendulum had swung back, there came a retarding in its next swing forward.¹

In the latter part of February, a notable interpellation was introduced by Jules Favre. He claimed that the Ministry had not yet given due assurance that the country governed. It had caused bloodshed in Paris; it had arrested four hundred and fifty citizens, who were, for the most part, inoffensive; it had not reorganized the National Guard; and, in short, had made no substantial change from the old system of personal government. Furthermore, he declared that the Opposition would not be satisfied until the Chamber, which had been elected under the old system of governmental inter-

¹ *Annual Register*, 1870, vol. cxii, pp. 128, 131; Redesdale, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 527; *Spectator*, Jan. 15, 1870; *Saturday Review*, Jan. 15, 1870.

ference, had been superseded by one more honestly representative. He was answered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Daru, in whom of all the Cabinet, the Left had the greatest confidence. His refutation of the leading charges was so convincing that the Government received a gratifying vote of confidence, in which it was supported by many of the Opposition.¹

It was unfortunate that the accord among the Ministers, of which Count Daru had boasted at this time, was so soon shaken. The trouble came from beyond the mountains,—a disagreement as to the course the French should pursue in view of the Ecumenical Council's desire to proclaim the doctrine of papal infallibility. Count Daru's advice that France send an envoy to protest against such proceedings was opposed by the head of the Ministry. It cannot be doubted that this matter, the culmination of which was overshadowed by the outbreak of the war, was sufficiently grave to have justified Count Daru's recommendation. He argued that the new Catholic pretensions would give fresh arms to the revolutionary party and vastly weaken the Conservative influence of the Church by introducing a schism among its members.²

Overruled in this, and sure that the forces of socialism and revolution would now receive new impetus, he showed no inclination to try by foreign war to turn the hootings of the Belleville mob into a shout of patriotism. Late in March, he gave out a significant interview on French foreign policy which was published in the leading German papers. He declared his policy toward Germany to be above all a policy of peace, and, as an earnest of his sincerity, gave news of the contemplated reduction of the army, and of the Ministry's

¹ *Spectator*, Feb. 26, 1870. The vote was 236 to 18.

² *Ibid.*, March 5, 1870.

resolution never to declare war except with the consent of the Corps Législatif.¹

It is matter for regret that this astute and pacific Minister was destined, like Clarendon, not to be on the political stage when the last efforts were made to thwart Bismarck's intrigue for war. The rift, which had appeared between himself and Ollivier in the conduct of French policy toward the question of papal infallibility, was hopelessly widened by his refusal to follow the Premier in upholding Napoleon's use of the plebiscite. M. Rouher's obstructionist tactics towards the Government's reforming bills were answered by the Emperor's decision to adopt at once all the reforms required by constitutional government, and, by submitting to the people a *senatus consultum* embodying them, to gain for France through popular support of imperial reform, those benefits which the extreme Left seemed eager to bring about by a revolution precipitated by the socialists.² To Count Daru, but lately won over to the support of the Emperor, this reversion to the plebiscite,—even though it were used to inaugurate liberal reforms,—seemed a reversion to a policy which he could not support. In April, the Government accepted his resignation.³

The momentous plebiscite was submitted at a time of great industrial unrest. The ten thousand workmen at the iron and steel foundries and factories at Creuzot, of which M. Schneider, President of the Corps Législatif, was owner, had abandoned work for a time in January, again in March, and now once more were in a state of ferment; the iron workers of Fourchambault in the Department of the Loire had stopped work; and placards posted in Paris and other industrial cen-

¹ *News of the World*, March 27, 1870.

² *Spectator*, March 26, 1870.

³ *Ibid.*, Apr. 16, 1870.

tres called for a general strike of workmen throughout the Empire. This intense unrest was connected in some way, which the authorities could not trace, with foreign agencies.¹ In view of the fact that Bismarck, at a later time, boasted that he had so ordered matters in Italy that, had that country chosen to aid France in the coming war, she would have been incapacitated by the outbreak of serious disorders,² it would seem that an interesting topic of investigation might be the question of Bismarck's connection with the strikes in the French munition plants,—strikes which not only embarrassed France in her new domestic policy, but retarded the manufacture of implements of war, and, perhaps, played a part in inclining the President of the Corps Législatif, to a declaration of war, which would not only be profitable to his industry but could be counted upon to still disaffection into a quiet concentration on the patriotic manufacture of arms "*pour la patrie.*"

However this may have been, the industrial unrest prevalent at the time of the plebiscite went far towards giving the Emperor that great majority which would enable him to boast of popular approval in support of his future actions. The peasants were alarmed by the fear of civil war or the enforcement on the Government of the strange doctrines preached by the artisans of the cities. They believed those who told them that to vote "yes" to the plebiscite,—to support the Emperor—was to vote for peace. The Government was able to press its arguments the more effectively by the discovery of a vicious plot against the Emperor's life. It had been concocted by one Beaury, a young deserter from the army, who had affiliations with some of the prominent agitators of Paris. The official press, on the exposure of the

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 280; *Spectator*, Apr. 16, 1870; *Annual Register*, vol. cxii, p. 134.

² Malet to Lyons, Sept. 17, 1870, Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 321.

plot, claimed that every "no" to the plebiscite meant approval of assassination and anarchy, and on this ground those who subscribed funds for agitation against it were arrested.¹

France, therefore, when it was asked to reckon the cost of a Napoleon, found that it was still not too dear to pay. Even though Napoleon might not be sincere in all his promises, he was old, and ill, and the Prince Imperial was very young. Neither could be expected to hinder the development of that constitutionalism which was to give security for the future. The Emperor was supported by rather more than the expected majority. But in analysis the vote appeared not so reassuring as *in toto*. Not only Paris, but all of the larger cities had strikingly availed themselves of this opportunity to show their disaffection. More serious still, the army unexpectedly marred its record of loyalty by the returning of fifty-thousand noes.²

There are two distinct versions of the effect this adverse minority from the military had on Napoleon. The first comes from Lord Redesdale's report of a conversation he had with a Frenchman,—friend of the Emperor and his former Minister, but of a somewhat dubious reputation as to honesty. The other comes directly from another friend of the Emperor, and former ambassador to France from England. The Duc de Persigny says that Napoleon told him in the late spring that it was apparent that there remained for him but two alternatives: the sternest repression at home, or war abroad. Thereupon, Persigny, on the Emperor's suggestion, undertook to see whether it were possible to form a ministry on the programme of the absolute suppression of political agitation. Two days later, when he returned to

¹ *Spectator*, May 7, 1870; *Annual Register*, vol. cxii, p. 143.

² As *Punch* expressed it, "The Army turned up its noes." *Vide*, *Saturday Review*, June 4, 1870; *Spectator*, May 14, 1870; *Annual Register*, 1870, vol. cxii, p. 143.

render his report to the Emperor, he was kept waiting in the antechamber while Napoleon gave audience to Marshal Leboeuf, and on his admittance, he says that he saved the Emperor embarrassment by assuming that it was useless to revert to the matter of their former conversation. Whereupon, he was politely dismissed with the Emperor's admission that he had, indeed, changed his mind. In accordance with the new attitude, the Ministry was reformed with "devoted" adherents of the Emperor, so that M. Ollivier was left the only Liberal in his own cabinet, and the real direction of policy fell to the Minister of War, Marshal Leboeuf, and the new Foreign Secretary, the Duc de Gramont.¹

The other report comes from the Earl of Malmesbury, who had an intimate conversation with the Emperor on May the nineteenth, two days before the news of the formation of the new Ministry appeared in the British papers. To him, Napoleon admitted his disappointment at the returns from the army, but explained that the adverse votes had been cast in certain special barracks, where the officers were unpopular and the recruits numerous. He was gratified that the minority was overweighted by the three hundred thousand soldiers, who had voted for him. The numbers surprised the Englishman. He told Napoleon that he had supposed the army to number nearer six hundred thousand. To quote directly: the Emperor "gave no reply, but looked suddenly very grave and absent. He observed later that Europe appeared to be tranquil, and it was evident to me that at that moment he had no idea of the coming hurricane. . . . I feel sure that not a thought of the impending idea of a Hohenzollern being a candidate for the Spanish throne had crossed his mind, . . . He was no longer the same man of sanguine

¹ Redesdale, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 528.

energy and self reliance, and had grown prematurely old and broken." ¹ Surely, this is not the picture of a monarch who has but lately closeted himself with a Marshal of France to conspire for the making of a foreign war.

It would seem, rather, that the Emperor intended to regain approval by gentler means. In a letter addressed to Marshal Canrobert, Napoleon requested him to assure the generals, officers, and privates under his command that the Emperor's confidence in them had never been shaken, and to congratulate General Lebrun on the admirable firmness that he and his troops had shown in the suppression of the riots following the plebiscite.²

As to the character and intentions of the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, it is true that M. de Gramont was reported as hostile to Prussia and overfriendly to Austria, at whose capital he had lately represented France. But, certainly, at first he showed himself inclined to continue the pacific policy of his predecessor. He completed the arrangements for the reduction of the army which were to be presented to the Legislative Body late in June; he satisfied the Ambassador of Prussia, Baron Werther, as to his pacific intentions toward that country;³ and so late as the last day of June, it was reported in the British press that the Government had agreed to the sale of a number of the horses belonging to the French army because the drought had made exorbitant the cost of their upkeep.⁴ It is probable that Bismarck's manipulations would still have been suc-

¹ James Howard Harris, Third Earl of Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an ex-Minister* (London, 1884), vol. ii, pp. 414-415.

² *Annual Register*, 1870, vol. cxii, p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, 1870, vol. cxii, p. 148.

⁴ *Illustrated London News*, June 30, 1870. A third of the French regular Army was absent on leave, says Thos. W. Evans, *The Second French Empire* (N. Y., 1905), p. 200.

cessful in exacting the forthcoming declaration of war from France had Daru continued in office. But, assuredly, he would have had to contend against a Minister more tactful and more highly regarded abroad than was de Gramont. And it is probable that the policy of France in the negotiations preliminary to the War's outbreak would have been so managed as to have won for her from the Neutrals a cordial sympathy rather than distrust and indifference.

The drought, which occasioned the sale of the army horses, was, in June, having more serious consequences. It brought suffering and discontent not only to the rural population that saw their crops a failure, but to the cities where there was a great advance in the price of food. Paris, especially, suffered. The heat intensified the ravages of the prevalent smallpox epidemic, and the abandonment by the Government of the building programme of Baron Haussmann threw great numbers of men out of work. Moreover, the city authorities added fuel to the flame by refusing to pay the sums already due the builders.¹ Another disturbing factor was the Government's prosecution of the International Society of Workmen, thirty-eight of whose members had been brought to trial. It was accused of fomenting strikes, agitating for a democratic and social republic, causing the riots that followed the taking of the plebiscite, and abetting those who planned the assassination of the Emperor.²

If there was gloom in the cities and the country, there was gloom also at the Tuileries. Late investigations in the conspiracy of Beaury disclosed a widespread plot that, initiated in a conclave in London, had been carried further by seditious letters and pamphlets in Paris, and whose pur-

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, June 7, 1870; *News of the World*, June 12, 1870.

² *Spectator*, July 2, 1870.

pose was fully revealed by the discovery of a great number of explosive bombs, many of which were still ready to function.¹ An attack of rheumatic gout, from which the Emperor was suffering, was certainly in no manner alleviated by such news as this from his police. He was being continually hectoring by former political friends who were eager to regain their former places and scornful of the present Government. He was irritated, too, by the critical attitude of doubt with which his efforts at liberalism were discussed in English editorials. Lord Lyons expressed the wish that his countrymen would somewhat modify their tone in view of the recently renewed Commercial Treaty and the unhappy effect that constant criticism might have upon the Emperor.²

It was this prickly time that the exiled princes of the House of Orleans selected to petition for a return to France. Their request presented the Government with a disagreeable dilemma. To accede meant to admit to discontented France four popular princes around each of whom there might centre plots against the existing Government. To refuse meant to acknowledge weakness, and to receive the opprobrium not only of enemies, but of those who believed in the new pretensions to liberalism. These new adherents of Napoleon would look for an act of justice from a ruler, who, himself long an exile, had but recently been confirmed in his tenure of power by a large vote of confidence. The Government decided to oppose the return on the ground that, no matter how innocent the princes might be of intrigue, their presence in France would breed sedition, and that the plebiscite had been a direct appeal to the Emperor to maintain domestic peace.

The correspondent of the *Times* reported that, irrespec-

¹ *Times*, June 25, 1870; Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 285.

² Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 290.

tive of the Government's desire to base its refusal on the late vote of the people, public opinion was strongly in favor of permitting the return.¹ The Ministry, however, was upheld by a large majority in the Corps Législatif, though the honors of the debate went to the Opposition. M. Estancelin, gave them warning that their action would justify the taunt that if they did not dare to be just it was because they felt they were not strong.² It is never a happy day for a Ministry when its adversaries can launch against it an accusation so quotable.

This affair, which extended into July, was followed by a libellous attack on the Emperor by the editor of the *Figaro*, who, hitherto, had been his staunch supporter. The charge was that Lord Clarendon had lent to Louis Napoleon, before his accession to power, some twenty thousand pounds and, postponing the payment of interest at the time when the principal was returned, had later demanded, and been granted, the Treaty of Commerce in full payment.³ The story showed itself false at once to those who had any knowledge of the character of Clarendon or of the negotiating of the treaty. But free trade had become unpopular, due more to conditions brought about by the drought and intermittent strikes than to any defect proper to itself, and many seized on this gossip the better to declaim against the treaty. The effort to punish the editor further aggravated the offense by causing him to publish, in the most widely circulated journal of France, a lurid description of various episodes of Napoleon's pre-imperial career. On the ninth of July the Paris correspondent of the *London Graphic* reported that editors of the *Réveil*, the *Marseillaise*, the *Avenir National*, the *Rappel*, the *Siècle*, and the *Parlement* had also incurred

¹ *Times*, June 25, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, July 4, 1870; *Illustrated London News*, July 7, 1870.

³ *Times*, July 6, 1870; *Spectator*, July 9, 1870.

the disfavour of the Government, and were under sentences of fine and imprisonment for various sins of omission and commission.

It was in these early July days, made hectic, as we have seen, by drought, and heat, and pestilence; the unrest of the cities; and the doubt and distrust of the country; by overt and covert attacks on the jaded Emperor at home; and intrigue and criticism abroad,—it was in these days that the Minister for Foreign Affairs launched his bill for the reduction by ten thousand of the army contingent for 1870.¹ The bill was the outcome of that plan of Count Daru's which had enlisted Clarendon's efforts to obtain some similar action on the part of Prussia. It was the first step in a reduction which it was hoped could be made more drastic year by year, so that in the final period of the life of the third Napoleon, he might justify his assertion: "*L'Empire c'est la paix.*"

The bill was opposed by those radicals who professed themselves eager to do away with the whole existing army system, which they dubbed irksome, and costly, and provocative of war. To have followed them in their opposition to this reduction, on the ground that it was not sufficiently drastic, would have been to make an advance that France was no more willing than her neighbours to make. The radicals, themselves, had they been in power, might have been willing to postpone disarmament until there was a greater degree of amity and understanding between nations. It was opposed, also, by such men as the deputy, Latour, late Minister of Foreign Affairs, who, during his career had represented France both at Vienna and Berlin,—men who saw in modern diplomacy reason rather for the enlargement than the abolition of armies. He based his argument on the growing military power of Prussia and the necessity that France

¹ *Times*, July 1, 1870.

maintain her position, and insist upon the observance of the Treaty of Prague. The Government was fortunate in the debate in having the support of M. Thiers, usually its opponent. This able statesman contended that the bill would give an assurance of the Government's pacific tendencies and, at the same time, so far maintain its strength as to dissuade foreign Powers from disregarding its wishes. He was content to wish for peace, and to adopt that course which would manifest his desire, and help to realize it. The Premier went further. During the debate on the St. Gothard railway late in June, the Foreign Minister had asserted that the Government had no uneasiness and that peace was assured.¹

M. Ollivier reaffirmed this confidence in a statement that the grim war, declared within a fortnight, mocked to the echo: "The Government has no uneasiness whatever," said M. Ollivier. "At no epoch was the peace of Europe more assured. Irritating questions nowhere exist."²

¹ *Times*, June 21, 1870.

² *Manchester Guardian*, July 2, 1870; *Times*, July 1, 1870. Two days after the debate, the Emperor expressed to Prince Metternich his confidence that the peace of Europe was secure and that he would be able to transmit his crown to his son. *Vide*, Reginald Lucas, *Lord Glenesk and the Morning Post* (London, 1910), p. 237.

CHAPTER III

BRITISH NEGOTIATIONS PRECEDING THE DECLARATION OF WAR

DURING the doldrums of the first week in July of 1870, it seemed peace brooded over all the capitals of Europe. M. Ollivier, as we have seen, inaugurated the month with a grave assurance to the French Chamber that the time was one of peculiar serenity, and that there was apparent no difficulty of disturbing imminence. Diplomats were glad to make his words a summer text and gratefully close their portfolios and go vacationing. A calm almost sabbatical enwrapped the darkened embassies. In Paris, the Chambers were still sitting, but it was supposed the most important business was well finished with the disposal of the St. Gothard affair and the passing of the bill to reduce conscription. The Emperor was preparing to go to Vichy for the waters.¹ Mr. Washburne, the United States Minister to France, was leaving for Carlsbad with the happy reflection that he availed himself of a time unusually propitious.² In Berlin Herr von Thile was left in charge, while his King sought recreation at Ems and the Chancellor buried himself on his estates. The great houses of London, including the French embassy, were dark, though Parliament was still in languid session. Lord Granville had but lately acceded to the office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs, left

¹ *Gentleman's Annual*, 1830, "The Story of the War," pp. 1 *et seq.*

² E. B. Washburne, *The Franco-German War and Insurrection of the Commune* (Exec. Doc. no. 24, Washington, D. C., 1878), p. 1.

vacant by Clarendon's death. On the fifth of July, the veteran Under Secretary, Mr. Hammond, congratulated him on his having assumed his duties during the greatest lull in the Foreign Office he remembered.¹ *Tempo lente e suave*, truly, but already, *pianissimo*, could be heard the strain that was to swell to the *crescendo* of war!

From the time that the Bourbon, Isabella, had been forced to leave her castles in Spain, the provisional government had hawked her throne from England to Italy, and saw it still unoccupied. Most persistently it had been offered to young Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, brother of the new ruler of Rumania, a member of the reigning house of Prussia, and an officer in the Prussian army. He had twice declined its acceptance, but, in July, it became known to the French Minister at Madrid that Marshal Prim was in receipt of a third response that was favorable.² The news was received in Paris with the displeasure that is felt at the reopening of a disagreeable question that was supposed to have been settled. When rumours of the candidacy had reached the French Ministry a year before, Count Benedetti had been instructed to inform the Prussian Government of the dissatisfaction with which such a choice would be regarded in France. He had at that time been assured by Herr von Thile on his honour that the Prince was not, and could not seriously become, a candidate for the Spanish crown.³

The recrudescence of the question persuaded the Emperor that it was a matter which, considering the uneasy rela-

¹ Granville to Russell, July 7, 1870, Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 33.

² Comte Maurice Fleury, *Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie* (N. Y., 1920), vol. ii, chap. vii, *passim*.

³ Quotation from Duc de Gramont's *Circular to the Diplomatic Agents of the Empire* in a dispatch of Layard's, Madrid, July 25, 1870, *British State Papers for 1870*, Foreign Office Series, vol. lxx, p. 42.

tions existing between France and Prussia since Sadowa, must be handled with firmness and circumspection. In the absence of his Ambassador from London, he commissioned Baron Rothschild to transmit the disquieting news of the candidacy to Gladstone, and to represent to him the displeasure felt in France and urge the British Government to do what it could to prevent its aggravation.¹

On the next day, July the sixth, France was again represented in England, and M. de Lavalette called on Lord Granville to give official repetition to the informal message.² The British Government, until this time, professedly had been in ignorance of the project. Earl Granville expressed himself as not surprised at the unfavorable reception it had received in France, though he could not share the French estimate of its importance, and regretted that Gramont had spoken in strong terms to Baron Werther, the Prussian Ambassador. He readily promised to use what influence he could, both with Spain and Prussia, to persuade them to the abandonment of the project.³

The despatches which he forthwith sent to the British representatives in Berlin and Madrid are models of diplomatic correspondence. Lord Loftus is informed that the British Government cannot believe that an offer so secretly conducted can have received the sanction of King William. The British Ambassador to Prussia is to remind that Power of the present sensitiveness of opinion in France to Prussian aggrandisement and the occasion this opportunity offers to exhibit a friendliness and forbearance that would in-

¹ Morley, *Life of Gladstone* (N. Y., 1911), vol. ii, p. 325; Hunt and Poole, *Political History of England* (N. Y., 1905-1915), vol. xii, p. 261; Sir Spencer Walpole, *History of Twenty-five Years* (N. Y., 1904-1908), vol. ii, p. 482.

² Newton, *Lord Lyons*, vol. i, p. 295.

³ Granville to Lyons, July 6, 1870, *Brit. State Papers for 1870*, Foreign Office, vol. lxx, p. 2.

volve no sacrifice. He is to urge as his main argument, however, the interest of Spain in the matter—the difficulties that she might encounter should she select a dynasty so hateful to the neighboring French.¹ The despatch sent to Mr. Layard at Madrid after the Spanish Minister had called to announce the choice of his Government, embodies a sigh for Lord Clarendon, who had understood Spain so well and been so highly regarded there. It makes no pretence to dictate to Spain her choice of king, but for “prudential reasons” urges that she look further.²

On the day that Lord Granville despatched his propitiatory message to Prussia, M. de Gramont, having received no reply to his representations at Berlin and Madrid, complicated the task of mediation by declaring in the Corps Législatif that the advancement of the Hohenzollern prince could have no end but war.³ The vehemence of the speech surprised the British Ambassador who had discussed the matter only the day before with M. Ollivier and found him firm but not bellicose. The speech was complained of to Lord Lyons by the Prussian *Chargé d’Affaires*, who was acting in Baron Werther’s absence. Though making no defence for the precipitateness of Gramont’s declaration, the British Ambassador, nevertheless, expressed the opinion that it had the entire approval of the French nation and that it was, accordingly, the King of Prussia, rather than the Emperor, who could with dignity and honor put an end to the affair.⁴

¹ Granville to Lyons, July 6, 1870, *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, p. 3.

² Despatches of Granville to Layard, July 7th and 8th, 1870, *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, pp. 5-10.

³ “*L’avenement du Prince de Hohenzollern c’est la guerre*,” Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 296; *Gentleman’s Annual* for 1870, “Story of the War,” pp. i *et seq.*

⁴ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 7, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, pp. 7-8.

To his chief, he wrote even more frankly of the inflamed state of French opinion. He believed the Ministry was no more than making an attempt to gain popularity by energetically voicing the feeling of the nation, but that they were really desirous of settling the affair by diplomacy.¹ One must remember the lean years France had recently been through and the dubious position of her Emperor and his Ministry to understand those "faults and follies," which Gladstone with the overemphasis of oratory accused of being "without parallel in the history of nations."²

To French insistence, Prussia opposed an attitude of obdurate resistance. Her Ambassador at London, Count Bernstorff, maintained to Lord Granville that the matter was not one which concerned North Germany, but that if France chose to make war his country was prepared to defend itself.³ The British Ambassador at St. Petersburg represented Russia's attitude to be identic in attaching no responsibility to Prussia for the election of a Hohenzollern to the Spanish throne.⁴ It is lamentable that Gladstone's Cabinet was not better informed of the extent and ramifications of the negotiations preceding the election.⁵ Had Downing Street even known that the candidature had been the subject of discussion between the Prussian King, his Chancellor, and von Moltke, Lord Granville might have

¹ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 7, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 5-7.

² Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 327.

³ Hunt and Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

⁴ Sir A. Buchanan to Granville, July 9, 1870; *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, p. 49.

⁵ On Feb. 27, 1870, Bismarck drew up a confidential report in which he strongly favoured the candidature. On March 15, a council was held to discuss the matter at which there were present Moltke, Roon, Thile, Bismarck, Prince Anthony, and Leopold. Moltke on this occasion let it be known that Prussia was in a condition to combat Napoleon's disapproval. Prince Leopold, however, refused to become a

succeeded in puncturing the cool armor of unconcern which so aggravated France and so persistently repelled the conciliating efforts of the British. It would seem, too, that the information that Lord Lyons supplied was not so complete as it should have been. He was deceived by the belligerent tone of certain press articles and by the warlike attitude of the Parisians into thinking that there existed a burning, national desire for revenge on Prussia.¹ At a time when the French Emperor was heartily wishing that the perturbed deputies and ministers "would follow the sage practice of the American Indians and keep their mouths shut," when the Empress was urging Isabella to use her influence to prevent the accession of so unwelcome a successor, and Bismarck was finding it necessary to keep Dr. Busch constantly employed in writing anonymous articles that would incite the French, it was believed in Downing Street that impetus to the quarrel came from France rather than from Prussia.

On the tenth of the month, matters were somewhat bettered by Gramont's interview with Lord Lyons, in which he gave the British a basis for mediation. The French demand for the withdrawal of the Prince's candidature, which Rothschild had earlier communicated to Gladstone as the *sine qua non* of the negotiations, remained the same, but it appeared now that the French advanced the demand with more of reason. Benedetti,—the Minister sent to ascertain

candidate. In April, Bismarck sent agents to Spain on a secret mission. At the end of May Leopold was won over to the project, largely through the efforts of the Crown Prince. The next month Salazar, at Bismarck's suggestion, came to Sigmaringen to negotiate with Leopold's father in order to come to a final agreement. The young Prince had only yielded a consent contingent on the Royal approval. "After a hard struggle," King William agreed to the project on June 21. Fleury, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, chap. vii; Grant Robertson, *Bismarck* (London, 1918), pp. 265-267.

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 297.

the attitude of Prussia in the matter,—had been unable to interview Bismarck, and disliking in an affair of such gravity to negotiate solely with an Under Secretary, who could only offer to his objections the parrot-like repetition that the affair was not germane to the Government, had gone directly to the King at Ems. The result was, Gramont told Lyons, that the King had admitted having given his consent. He now promised to confer with Prince Leopold and give a *definitive* answer to France when he had done so. This admission and agreement, M. Gramont believed, removed the ambiguity of the affair, making it distinctly one between France and the King of Prussia. Gramont assured Lord Lyons that if the Prince of Hohenzollern should now, on the advice of the King, withdraw his acceptance, the whole affair would be at an end. The British Ministers decided to ask the Queen to write confidentially advising the Prince's withdrawal. France, meanwhile, deferred any ostensible preparations for war.¹

On the morning of the eleventh, Gramont informed Lord Lyons that, as yet, no answer had been received from King William, but that his Government would wait another day, although the Corps Législatif was restive under the delay and the Ministry was becoming most unpopular.²

At two p. m. the following day, Lord Lyons telegraphed that an answer had been received from the King of Prussia. It was a demand for time made on the surprising admission that that most important princeling, Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, was not to be found.³ Later in the day, a more extended answer was received. In it His

¹ Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 327; Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 10, 1870, *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, pp. 16-17.

² Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 12, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 18-19.

³ Ernest Hartley Coleridge, *Life and Correspondence of John Duke, Lord Coleridge, Lord Chief Justice of England* (London, 1904), vol. ii, p. 172. The telegram does not appear in the *British State Papers*.

Majesty disclaimed all connection with the offer of the Spanish crown to his kinsman and declined to advise him to withdraw his acceptance. However, the father of the elusive Prince sent a copy of the telegram which he had despatched to Marshal Prim, declaring that his son's candidature was at an end.¹ M. de Gramont regretted that the King had not only not given the *definitive* answer he had promised but had now distinctly refused to advise the Prince in the matter and had reverted to his attitude that a distinction should be drawn between himself as King of Prussia and as head of the family of Hohenzollern. The Prince himself was of age and it was not known that he entertained such regard for his father's wishes as to induce him to prefer filial obedience to submission to any future prompting of the Prussian King or his Chancellor.

Lord Lyons seems to have had no patience with these French misgivings. He believed, and said so, that the demand of France had been fulfilled and that it was her duty now to fulfil her own promise to the British Government and consider the matter ended. He warned France that insistence on a matter of form would be regarded as culpable by all of Europe, whereas Prussia, were she pushed to war, would gain sympathy as fighting in self-defence and could expect to rally all Germany to her support.² Granville approved Lord Lyons' despatch, and himself used the same arguments to the French Ambassador. On the following

¹ On the morning of July 12, when Napoleon had received news of Prince Anthony's telegram to Prim, he said to the Italian Ambassador, Count Nigra: "This dispatch . . . means peace. I have requested you to come here for the purpose of having you tell the news to your Government. . . . I know very well that public opinion is so excited that it would have preferred war. But this renunciation is a satisfactory solution and disposes, at least for the present, of every pretext for hostilities." Thos. W. Evans, *The Second French Empire*.

² Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 12, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, pp. 20-21.

day he telegraphed that Lord Lyons should make representations, before the French Council assembled, of the immense responsibility that the British Government would charge to France if she sought to enlarge the grounds of the quarrel by declining to accept the Prince's withdrawal.¹ It may be that the severity of Granville's telegram was due not only to the exigency of the situation but to irritation because M. de Gramont, in his speech to the Deputies on the eleventh, had declared that up to that time all the European Cabinets appeared to admit the legitimacy of French complaints,² a point that was made the subject of a despatch to Lord Lyons the same day³ and of subsequent objections from Parliament.⁴

Certainly this day, the thirteenth, was one of distinct ill omen for France. In Paris, M. de Gramont was in receipt of a telegram from the French Minister to Russia which advised him that when the Emperor Alexander had begged King William to order the Prince's withdrawal, the Prussian monarch had refused and accompanied his refusal with no single word of explanation.⁵ He was also in receipt of a most extraordinary telegram from Stuttgart which stated that the Württemberg Government had been informed that Lord Granville had said France would attack Prussia immediately by sea and by land without a declaration of war were her demands refused. The Württemberg Government had received the information *via*

¹ Substance of telegram from Granville to Lyons, July 14, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, p. 37.

² Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 35; Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 328; *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, p. 26.

³ *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, p. 22.

⁴ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, July 14th and July 18th, 1870, pp. 225 and 370. Russell and Horsman were the interpellators.

⁵ Lyons to Granville, July 13, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, p. 26.

Berlin and, as well as Lord Lyons could remember, from the Prussian Government.¹ From Vienna, the French agent transmitted Count Beust's warning against pushing matters to extremities. The state of feeling in the South German states, which he believed himself peculiarly able to gauge, was not one of sympathy to France in the present matter.² In view of these developments, France was eager for such a definitive termination of the affair as could come only if his Prussian Majesty would forbid Prince Leopold from altering at any future time his present decision. Gramont assured Lyons that if England could succeed in obtaining this agreement from the King, he would give a written assurance that for his Government the incident would be terminated.³ Lord Lyons forwarded the request,⁴ and reported that the impression prevailed on the night of the thirteenth that it was yet possible to preserve peace. The language of the Cabinet was more pacific. It was understood that the renunciation of the prince had come to confirm that received from his father, and the Spanish Government had formally declared to the Government of France that the candidature was at an end.⁵

It would seem from an interview of Lord Loftus with Bismarck on this fateful thirteenth that the tempest clouds blew now from the north.¹ The day before, the Prussian Chancellor had left Varzin to go to the King at Ems, but,

¹ Lyons to Granville, July 18, 1870, *ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

² Bloomfield to Granville, Vienna, July 13, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 50-51.

³ Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 330.

⁴ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 13, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, 26.

⁵ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 14, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 35.

⁶ At a Cabinet Council, held on the 13th, the Emperor gained the Ministry's consent to his proposal to submit the subject of the controversy to arbitration. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

stopping at Berlin, he was met by telegrams from his royal master that so displeased him that he sent Marshal Eulenburg to the King instead, and himself remained in the capital, half resolved to resign his post. He was disposed now to admit a mighty concern in a matter which, hitherto, he had permitted the King to deal with in the capacity of head of the House of Hohenzollern. When, then, the British Ambassador congratulated him on the solution which apparently was reached, Count Bismarck demurred. He told Lord Loftus that the "extreme moderation evinced by the King of Prussia under the menacing tone of the French Government and the courteous reception by His Majesty of Count Benedetti at Ems, after the severe language held to Prussia both officially and in the French press" was producing general indignation. He mentioned various telegrams which he had received that morning confirmative of such dissatisfaction. He, then, expressed a wish that the British Government would officially declare its satisfaction at the solution of the question by the "spontaneous act of Prince Leopold," and bear public testimony to the calm and moderation of the King of Prussia, and his Government, and the German Press.¹ May it be observed that this request to Great Britain was rather extraordinary in that it asked official commendation for an act which the Prussian King and his Government had repeatedly declared to be wholly unofficial and committed by the King only in his personality as head of the House of Hohenzollern? However, the distinction is one so subtle that, were it not that the offender was the clear-headed Bismarck, it is not surprising to find it occasioning confusion to the very Government that avowed it. The Count went further and demanded that the solution of this purely family affair

¹ Loftus to Granville, Berlin, July 13, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, pp. 32-33; Hunt and Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

should be publicly acknowledged by France to the European Powers and that France should promise to raise no further claims in the matter and disavow, or satisfactorily explain, the menacing language of the Duc de Gramont. Under the existing circumstances, it was impossible, the Chancellor said, for him to receive the French Ambassador, and were the conditions he had just outlined not fulfilled, "Prussia would be obliged to seek explanations from France." The British Ambassador, who had begun the interview with congratulations, hastened off to write his chief that, were the French Government not induced to appease enraged Prussia, war would be inevitable.

His despatch did not reach Granville until the fifteenth. Had it come a day earlier, Her Majesty's Government would have been saved from the rebuff it encountered by so far acceding to Gramont's request of the thirteenth as to ask that the dually constituted William of Hohenzollern would confirm the Prince's withdrawal by an expression of approval.¹ Before the deferential British request reached Prussia and Count Bismarck had time to express regret at receiving a proposal of so impossible a nature as to preclude him from presenting it to King William,² an episode took place which totally changed the state of feeling in the French capital.

On the morning of the fourteenth, the hopes of Ollivier were dispelled by a startling telegram from the *Chargé d'Affaires* at Berlin. It stated that an article had appeared in the Prussian Ministerial organ, the *North German Gazette*, to the effect that the "French Ambassador had requested the King to promise never to allow a Hohenzollern to be a candidate for the throne of Spain, that His

¹ Granville to Lyons, July 14, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, p. 28.

² Granville to Loftus, July 15, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 30.

Majesty had, thereupon, refused to receive the Ambassador and sent him word by an Aide-de-Camp that he had nothing more to say to him." The French Government, alarmed at news so much more disquieting than that sent by Count Benedetti, himself,¹ nevertheless, prevented it from becoming generally known and made no communication on the subject to the Corps Législatif and the Senate in their sessions of that day. Lord Lyons, however, who was still dutifully urging moderation and caution, expressed great fear that when the evening papers copied the article of the *North German Gazette*, the anger of the populace might precipitate the Government into declaring war.² The solution of this family affair had, in a way, been withdrawn from the competency of the Ministry and laid before the high tribunal of the people.³

By evening, it was known at the Quai d'Orsay that the Prussian Government had given endorsement and further publicity to the article by telegraphing it to all its embassies throughout the Continent. Its communication to Baron Werther, the conciliatory ambassador to Paris, was accompanied by instructions to leave his post at once. The

¹ Lyon's report of interview with Gramont, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 40.

² Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 14, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 35-36. A special supplement of the *Nord Deutsche Zeitung*, containing the famous Ems telegram that had been edited by Bismarck, was distributed gratis on the streets of Berlin on July 13, 1870, according to a letter of the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*.

³ It can be a matter of interest more to the metaphysician or to the psychologist than to the historian, that two or three days after the publication of the inflammatory account of the first interview of King William with Benedetti, the aide-de-camp reported that his master, who as the Prussian King was a Dr. Jekyll, who really knew nothing of the nefarious Spanish business, and as head of the House of Hohenzollern was a Mr. Hyde, who persisted in consenting to the project, had agreed at Ems to withdraw his consent "in the same sense and to the same extent it had been given." Granville to Loftus, July 19, 1870; *ibid.*, vol. 70, p. 60.

Emperor returned from St. Cloud and held a council at the Tuileries. The indefatigable Lord Lyons for the first time found it impossible to communicate directly with the Duc de Gramont, and could extract no comforting reassurance from the head of his Cabinet.¹

The next day, July the fifteenth, the reserves were called out and the Government, after reviewing the negotiations, declared before the Chambers that further attempts at conciliation were impossible. It laid especial emphasis on the fact that the King of Prussia had announced to the French Ambassador that he would not receive him, and that the Prussian Government had communicated this decision to the Cabinets of Europe, and instructed Baron Werther to demand his passports.² These points were stressed again in an interview which the Duc de Gramont had with Lord Lyons later in the day. Prussia, said the French Minister, had deliberately insulted France by declaring to the public that the King had affronted Count Benedetti. She had shown herself eager to take credit with the people of Germany for having acted with haughtiness and discourtesy, and had seen fit to telegraph the news of the affront to the Prussian agents throughout Europe. The matter was the more provocative, said the Duke, since the French Government was aware that its Minister had not been treated with such rough discourtesy as Prussia had boasted. It was the boast and not the episode itself which was the "gravamen of the offense." It constituted an insult which had made it impossible for France further to avail herself of the good offices of Great Britain. He expressed the hope that that Government might not be so wedded to the doctrine of peace as to refuse sympathy to an old ally, who was about to commence hostilities, and he assured Lord Lyons that, in

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 39.

² Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 15, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 36-37.

regard to Belgium (ever "England's funny-bone"), the French Government had already spontaneously given it assurance that its neutrality would be regarded as a fundamental principle.¹

The British Ambassador believed that no diminution of friendly feeling would take place but that, at the same time, chagrin would be felt that France had not contented herself with the simple withdrawal of the pretensions of Prince Leopold. One further effort was made by Lord Granville even at this eleventh hour. In identic notes to France and Prussia he urged those countries to avail themselves of the Twenty-third Protocol of the Conference of Paris of 1856.² Its provisions were recognized as offering a dignified manner in which aggrieved nations might submit to mediation those questions which, otherwise, would lead to war.³ The Government of France declined to resort to the Protocol on the ground that the difficulty between herself and Prussia was one involving national dignity and so had been reserved from its provisions.⁴ The Prussian Government based its refusal on the fact that since France had taken the initiative in the direction of war, it would be unbecoming, and even impossible because of the national excitement, for Prussia to take the initiative in negotiating for peace.⁵

The appeal to the Protocol had been, indeed, but formal. The events of the thirteenth of July had success-

¹ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 15, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 39-40.

² Granville to Lyons, July 15, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 35. On July 17th Loftus, in compliance with instructions, was still urging the Protocol at Berlin.

³ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 18, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 64.

⁴ Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 19, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 58.

⁵ Bismarck to Loftus, July 18, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 68; Loftus, in a despatch of the same date, states that addresses were pouring in from all parts of the country expressing loyalty to the King and a readiness to incur any sacrifice for the honor and protection of the country.

fully nullified any efforts at mediation. The article in the *North German Gazette* and the publicity given it by Prussia had convinced France that it was the intention of Bismarck to make the "family matter" a pretext for belligerency.

On the nineteenth of July, the French *Chargé d'Affaires* at Berlin delivered the declaration that his Government was sure the Prussian Chancellor had angled for.

CHAPTER IV

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DECLARATION OF WAR

DIPLOMACY is somewhat like the American game of stud poker where one card is always held back. Even for those who sit in at the green table there is an element of uncertainty, but for those who watch from afar there is even greater certainty of uncertainty. It is often ludicrous to hear them expending their efforts at wit or wisdom in pronouncing judgments on situations which they totally misapprehend. The candidature of Prince Leopold for the Spanish throne, made known by Madrid despatches of July the third, was a complete surprise in London. Both Conservative and Liberal papers condemned the secrecy and the quixotic audacity of the Spanish negotiations that had led to his selection by the Cortes, and there was no thought of blaming France for her disinclination to see herself thorned on either side by a Hohenzollern. Berlin despatches in announcing the Prince's acceptance of the offer, made bold to report the nomination as being regarded favorably in England.¹ This the *Times* at once denied.² It criticized, however, the imperious tone with which France interposed in the petty intrigue of princes. It was an American-cousin way of demanding the mustard at the point of a revolver.³

For the most part, even those journals that thought French interests would be endangered by the "Jack-in-the-

¹ Quoted in *Correspondence du Nord-Est*.

² *Times*, July 7, 1870.

³ *Ibid.*, July 12, 1870.

Box " affair believed no war would result. " Louis Napoleon," said the *Daily News*, discounting the " fantastic and passionate lucubrations " of the independent French journals, " Louis Napoleon, no doubt, will think it best to bow to the *fait accompli* and make the best of it " ¹ Even if it should cause a civil war in Spain, it will not be permitted to disturb the peace of Europe." ² Said the *Manchester Guardian*,

France will accept the election and Prussia will disclaim any hostility or disrespect. The Emperor would prefer a Hohenzolern to the Duke of Montpensier, who might be expected to aid Orleanist intrigue, and as for the French people, they have already endured, with a bad grace indeed, aggrandizements of Prussia upon a great scale, and they will not be very seriously embittered by the thought that a younger branch of the house of Hohenzolern has obtained royalty in Spain.³

The *London Graphic* declared French interests in no way threatened, and, contenting itself with a brief mention of the affair, expended much space in describing the camp being held at Wimbledon, and discussing Disraeli's recently published *Lothair*.⁴

When, however, the candidacy received no check from the clearly expressed disapproval of France, it began to be thought that Spain must have had some assurance of Prussian support to show herself persistent. The *Times* declared the crux of the question to be the share Count Bismarck had had in the nomination and noted that, though the Prussian papers were in tone very temperate, they forbore to advise their Government to extinguish the affair by dis-

¹ *Daily News*, July 15, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, July 6, 1870.

³ *Manchester Guardian*, July 6, 1870.

⁴ *London Graphic*, July 9, 1870.

suading Prince Leopold.¹ The *Telegraph*, very early in the controversy, described him as the "nominee of the Count and probably his obedient servant."² The *Globe and Traveller* urged the Prussian Government to take immediate steps to procure the rejection of the Spanish offer.³ And the *Spectator* avowed that since General Prim was no fool he must have known how his project would be regarded in Paris and Berlin, and been ready to resort to arms if necessary.⁴ It was an Irish paper that most luxuriated in implicating and imprecating Prussia: "Prim and Bismarck have tricked, deceived, and outwitted Napoleon," says the *Nation*, "have menaced, defied, and humiliated France."⁵

On July 12, a week after the affair had begun to arouse general comment, telegrams reached London giving news of an imperious ultimatum just sent by France to Prussia. A serious panic took place on the Stock Exchange. Some relief was felt when, that afternoon, news was received of the Prince's withdrawal. But as the reports from France continued to be discouraging, fresh excitement set in.⁶ This pocket-book disaster and the receipt of the circular sent out by Spain disclaiming any responsibility of Prussia in her action, induced a more nervous attitude toward the affair. Its base was seen to have widened and, in this, France was believed to be the offender. From then on the tone of the press became less sympathetic. The *Times* urged the Emperor to consult the wishes of his eight million subjects before he allowed himself to be carried away by the clamorous

¹ *Times*, July 12, 1870.

² *Daily Telegraph*, July 7, 1870.

³ *Globe and Traveller*, July 8, 1870.

⁴ *Spectator*, July 9, 1870.

⁵ *Nation* (Belfast), July 9, 1870.

⁶ *Telegraph*, July 12, 1870.

politicians of the boulevards.¹ The *Standard*, heretofore very sensitive to the French view of the matter, suspected that the rumoured ultimatum concerned itself with even more than the immediate question.² And the *Telegraph*, also reckoned as a partisan of France, chronicled the gossip as to the Prince's withdrawal on the fourteenth with the fear that, were it true, only a temporary suspension of the convulsion would be effected. Small wonder that the *Siècle* took alarm at the uneasy tone of the British press and urged the French Government to moderation.³

While the London papers thus expressed alarm, their Paris correspondents were preparing despatches that would have gone far to steady confidence. Rumours of the episode at Ems—the “garden scene,” as some one later dubbed it,—followed so hot upon the news of the Prince's renunciation that, in some cases, the pacific despatches were never sent. In instances where they were transmitted and given credence by London editors, there occurred the phenomenon of British papers appearing with tidings of peace after the French Chambers had already given their decision for war. It was like a rainbow seen dimly through a blinding storm. The correspondent of the *London Graphic* wrote, on the thirteenth, that in Paris funds had gone up, and the general opinion was in favour of peace. In the same envelope he enfolded another dispatch saying that even as he wrote thus hopefully there was taking place in the Kursaal that famous interview, the report of which roused the Parisians to fury. The laconic telegram from Ems (which England was not to know for years had been maliciously edited by Bismarck) appeared in the *North*

¹ *Times*, July 13, 1870.

² *Standard*, July 13, 1870.

³ *Times*, July 15, 1870 (letter from Paris Correspondent, dated July 14).

German Gazette on the morning of the fourteenth, and was at once sent by the Reuter Agency to London. At the same time there came from Berlin correspondents news of the massed crowds that assembled in front of the palace to cheer their ruler and beg that he lead them to the Rhine.¹

Editorial comment fully approved the indignation of the Prussians. The *Times* declared that it could no longer be doubted that it was the fault of the French that further negotiations were almost impossible, that nothing could justify the deliberate provocation with which the discourtesy of Spain had been fastened upon Prussia.² The *Daily Telegraph* blamed France for having spoken "the fatal last word that precedes a conflict of which none can estimate the results." It believed that the Envoy's intrusion on the royal promenade had not been without malice prepense. However, consideration was given to the singular promptness with which the King resented the rudeness, and the immediate publicity his Government had given the incident. Conviction that France was wholly to blame for the unfortunate termination of the quarrel was weakened by reports from French sources that a circular had been sent to Prussian representatives abroad, which confirmed the affront offered to M. Benedetti, and declared the King to have restored to Prince Leopold the liberty of accepting the Spanish crown. The issuing of such statements after M. Ollivier's organ, the *Constitutionnel*, had recorded the acceptance of the withdrawal, the *Telegraph* believed, made Prussia culpable with France.³ The rumoured circular, however, received no general comment in the English press. Another of the papers, that, like the *Telegraph*, condemned France with manifest reluctance was the Tory *Globe*. For while

¹ *Times*, July 15, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, July 15, 1870.

³ *Telegraph*, July 16, 1870.

admitting that, "if the accounts have not been exaggerated, it is impossible in the interests of truth and justice to say that war has not been provoked by the French Government," it warned its readers that Prussian conduct in times past had been equally precipitate and extravagant.

The morning that chronicled the momentous breach of etiquette at Ems heralded a day rife with rumours of the mounting excitement at Paris and Berlin. The later papers carried the news of the French Government's declaration to the Chambers which practically removed all hope of peace. That afternoon, Disraeli, rising in a hushed and breathless House of Commons, inquired of the Prime Minister whether or not the news the members had just been so anxiously reading were true, whether war had been made inevitable. Gladstone could give no further reassurance than that negotiations were not yet broken off. It must have been an uncomfortable session for the Prime Minister. No one more than he enjoyed the attitude of righteous condemnation and could so revel in the prolix splendour of indignation. It must have been galling to sit fettered by the chains of office and hear the Disraelian thunder against the French monarch who so wantonly disturbed the peace of Europe because he believed his own armament to be in better condition than his neighbour's, the description of the virtuous, enlightened age, which such impious levity flouted, and the sonorous prophecy that this sovereign would be punished by a more powerful force than any military army,—“the outraged opinion of an enlightened world.” Gladstone could only assume an attitude of forbearance and give brief assurance that the Government had made efforts at mediation and in this last extremity had appealed to the Protocol of 1856.¹

¹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd series, vol. cciii, pp. 346-347; Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, p. 335; Hunt and Poole, *Political History of England*, p. 262.

When the Prime Minister and his doughty opponent had seated themselves, the impression prevailed that both were of the opinion that Napoleon should be, in some way, castigated, but that, whereas the one had done no more than try to reason with him and finally urge that he submit his quarrel to more temperate heads, the other was certain that, had he been in office, something—no one knew exactly what—but something much more effective would have been done about it. In justice to France and the attitude of neutrality the Government had decided on, it would seem that Gladstone should have given some brief account of the progress of the negotiations that had been so assiduously and even so hopefully continued up to this time by the French and the British. It may have been that his extreme reticence was due to the impression made on him by the German accounts of the bearding of the aged King at Ems. Certainly, his appreciation of French claims appears to have been dulled to extinction. Granville, in his reply to interrogations in the House of Lords on the same subject, was no more communicative.¹ So late as the twenty-first, when the Government was still withholding information as to the negotiations, the *Globe* commented on its action as “a mystery most profound,” and urged that the facts be laid before the public without further delay.

But irrespective of paucity or authenticity of information, the Fourth Estate adjured the restraint of the Lords and Commons and was clamorous in its criticism of France and profuse in its speculations as to the causes of her iniquity. It was a finer thing to read the papers than to attend the sessions. For a few days it seemed the *Times* was reviving its old title of the “Thunderer.” *Vide* the leader of the sixteenth: “The greatest national crime that we have had the pain of recording in these columns since the

¹ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciii, p. 35.

days of the First French Empire has been consummated. War is declared—an unjust but premeditated war. This dire calamity, which overwhelms Europe with dismay, is, it is now too clear, the act of one man in France. It is the ultimate result of personal rule.” The *Times* itself, however, was not so dismayed that it could not see the ultimate end of the war to be the conquest by France of the left bank of the Rhine, or the acquisition by Prussia of Alsace and Lorraine, and that the failure of Napoleon’s dynastic ambitions would result should the latter take place.

The *Economist*, immensely perturbed at the heavy fall in all description of securities, characterized the French declaration of war as “one of those awful events which brings comment to a stand,” and, then, straightway disproved its own judgment by a lengthy description of the French greed for prestige and the Emperor’s ambition that had directed Count Benedetti “to ask for more.”¹ The *Spectator*, showing the same vehement detestation of Napoleon which distinguished the *Times*, bewailed the fact that “Europe must pass through a year, perhaps years of misery, in order that one single man may secure the career and position of one single child.” It believed it to have been the recent adverse vote of a minority of the soldiery that induced Napoleon, “by a series of insults almost without precedent in diplomacy,” to force Germany to war.² The *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Manchester Guardian*³ both ironically congratulated Napoleon for the *modus operandi* with which he had brought Prussia to agree to a foregone decision. The *Daily News* with a sententiousness equal to the *Times*, declared that in the court of history the action of France would be rated as a crime—a crime against civilization, against

¹ *Economist*, July 16, 1870.

² *Spectator*, July 16, 1870.

³ Issues of July 16, 1870.

humanity, as well as against the peace and good order of the world.¹ The *Weekly Scotsman*, not to be outdone in indignation by its English contemporaries, but somewhat muddled as to the facts, delivered a scathing sermon on this "war for the sake of war" brought on after "the proposal of a proposal was withdrawn by those having national authority over the proposed to be proposed Prince."²

The amount of violent abuse in both the Liberal and Conservative journals of the British press, and more especially that in the *Times*, which was regarded as, in some manner, inspired by the Government, greatly irritated the French. Had they wished, they could have pointed to the fact that even on the sixteenth when British condemnation was at its hottest, the reports of correspondents writing from Paris had induced several papers to discount later tidings and believe the war cloud to have passed. The *Illustrated London News* of the sixteenth dared to rejoice, though timorously, at the "unexpectedly pacific tone which the affair of the week has happily taken." The *Examiner* recorded the fact that Prussia had thought it prudent to give way and hoped things would stay as they were and the King of three hundred legions not change his mind, nor the heir of the conqueror of Jena take a fancy to avenge Leipsic.³ The slow-moving *Queen*, on the same date, expressed belief that the resignation of the Prince's candidature would be the means of averting war—"at least on the present issue;" and the priestly *Tablet*, with like reservations as to the future lengths to which France might be driven by her desire to see Prussia eat humble pie, hoped that "the danger of war, which overhung Europe for the last week, is for a time dispelled."

¹ *Daily News*, July 16, 1870.

² *Weekly Scotsman and Caledonian Mercury*, July 22, 1870.

³ *Examiner and London Review*, July 16, 1870.

Between the extremes of denunciation against France for having occasioned the war and these misinformed pratings of the difficulty's pacific solution, were those papers that, acknowledging war's advent, still forbore to lay its blame on France, and in some case showed a willingness wholly to exonerate her. M. de Lesseps, at this time visiting England on the invitation of the Liverpool merchants, may have found congenial reading in the *Court Journal*, that, basing its argument on Berlin accounts of the King's affront to M. Benedetti and the restoration to Leopold of freedom of action in the Spanish affair, asserted that the declaration of war came from the ruler of Prussia and the offense was his.¹ The *Northern Whig* may have rejoiced the distinguished visitor with its appreciation of Napoleon's friendship for England and its doubts as to British comfort, should Europe fall under the domination of Bismarck-ruled Prussia.²

But for truly soul-satisfying endorsement M. de Lesseps should have shipped himself to John Bull's other island. Certainly nowhere could there have been found on July the sixteenth anyone more French than an Irishman. The *Weekly Freeman* commended the bold Minister, who looked facts squarely in the eye and delivered his ultimatum to a King, who with his Chancellor, was "privy to every step of the negotiations with Prim." The *Nation* flouted the British papers for their mischievous abuse of France and urged, with a logic that only an Irishman could follow, that this was preëminently a time for the "repeal of the Union." Only *Saunders'*, a Protestant paper largely without honour in its own country, blamed Napoleon for this fresh proof of his country's enslavement to military glory and his own willingness to upset the balance of power to give ambition scope.³

¹ *Court Journal and Fashionable Gazette*, July 16, 1870.

² *Northern Whig*, July 19, 1870.

³ *Saunders's News-letter and Daily Advertiser*, Dublin, July 16, 1870.

The hearty approval with which the Irish press greeted the decision for war gathered momentum from each groan of censure from the *Times* and *News*. Did the British papers denounce M. Rouher's indiscreet avowal that Napoleon had occupied four waiting years in the perfecting of armament and the organization of his country, the Irish papers rejoiced that he must, then, be in excellent fighting trim. Did the British express amazement at M. Ollivier's announcement that he entered upon the war with a light heart, the Irish applauded a blithe spirit so like their own.

As the *Spectator* put it, in commenting on this ebullient sympathy which other journals were deriding: "What with his Catholicism, his Celtic blood, and history, the genuine Irishman feels himself a younger brother of the Frenchman and intrinsically detests the sceptical, rigid, and unsympathetic Teuton."¹ It must be confessed that, for the most part, there was little demand for analysis of diplomatic documents or circumstantial details by the men of the shamrock. But there was a sincerity and abandon about their sympathy that was infectious. As John Mitchel put it, "Everybody is taking part in the general struggle: We take part instantly, frankly, and zealously—for France."²

On the evening of the nineteenth, partly as a demonstration against the alleged false representations of British opinion issuing hourly from the London press, the Irish of Dublin, to the number of twelve or fifteen thousand, assembled in front of the French Consulate. The police were competent to testify that there was nothing laboured or artificial about this demonstration. There were some ten or a dozen bands which alternated the *Marseillaise* with Irish melodies. There was a fight with the police over a French

¹ *Spectator*, July 23, 1870.

² John Mitchel, *Ireland, France, and Prussia* (Dublin, 1918), editorial from the *Irish Citizen*.

tricolour that had been wreathed with strips of green and orange; there were speeches that recalled the glorious exploits of the Sarsfield Brigade and the deeds of German hirelings in Ireland in '98, and ended by assuring France that if she gave the word thousands of Irish would come to her aid,—each very eager to kill his Hessian. The crowds, then, peacefully dispersed with the pleasant confidence that they had heartened all of France and had displeased the Protestant editor of *Saunders*'.¹

It made scant difference to them that in London that night the printers were setting up the Queen's proclamation of neutrality. Its publication was the signal for the *Times* dutifully to moderate its tone. The Thunderer declared with virtuous rectitude, that war being now inevitable and the primary dispute a matter of history, its editorial policy so far as duty allowed would be neutral. In an effort at retrospective justice, its editorials for the twentieth mentioned the existence of a plot between Bismarck and Prim simultaneously to attack France north and south, which, it hazarded, might have been the cause of Benedetti's insistence. A new version of the Ems episode stated that the envoy "happened" to meet the King in the Kursaal Gardens, and that the King, himself, began the interview by placing in Benedetti's hands a newspaper account of Leopold's renunciation. On another page its Paris correspondent reported that Ollivier was actually drawing up a pacific statement to the Chambers when he received the Prussian account of the famous interview.

But an impression intensely condemnatory of France could not materially be modified by these tardy addenda. The press, for the most part, refused to wriggle into the

¹ Alfred Duquet, *Ireland and France* (Dublin, 1916), intro., pp. xi-xiii; *Nation*, July 23, 1870; *Tablet*, July 23, 1870; *Saunders's*, July 25, 1870.

strait jacket of neutrality and its tone continued to sicken men like George Meredith, who laid small stress on the princely peccadillo that initiated a struggle which was now to be regarded as one between two nations.¹ The German residents of London in public meeting assembled did no more than an act of justice when, a day after the proclamation of neutrality, they thanked the English press for the almost unanimous sympathy it was affording Prussia.² It might be that Mr. Brooks would deliver no more sermons in St. James' Chapel praising King William and his nation,³ and that the Archbishop of Canterbury had set about composing a "strictly neutral and heartily pacific" prayer;⁴ but, as the *Spectator* frankly acknowledged, the English middle class was dead against the Emperor, and the only true neutral was the working man, who branded Napoleon a fiend, and William of Prussia, a fool.⁵ It was because England was essentially *not* neutral in her feelings that officials made such a grandiose parade of her neutrality, with something of the notion, perhaps, that a double negative would obscure an affirmative. Chambers of Commerce in large cities hastened to pass resolutions commending a rigorous silence as to the merits of the quarrel, and a member of Parliament rose in his place to warn journalists against making excursions outside the neutral pale.⁶ The British Government consented to take over the care of French in-

¹ George Meredith, *Letters of* (N. Y., 1912), vol. i, pp. 208-211, correspondence with his son and John Morley.

² *Times*, July 21.

³ This sermon of the Rev. Stopford Brooks was criticized by *Saunders's*, July 25, 1870.

⁴ Doubt of the puissance of Prussian arms made it difficult for the British to use this prayer, since it asked the Almighty to inspire the vanquished with submission. *Spectator*, Aug. 13, 1870.

⁵ *Ibid.*, July 23, 1870.

⁶ *Fortnightly Review*, "France and Germany," vol. xiv, pp. 36-37.

terests in Germany and received appropriate thanks,¹ but the French were aware of the British attitude and impatient of it. A caricature map of Europe, very popular in Paris, figured England as a fussy, nervous old lady, turning her back on Europe in a flutter of alarm, shocked and grieved at her neighbours having fallen to blows. A breeze from across the Channel blows the poor dame's petticoats through her legs, and almost lifts her off her feet, while she struggles with her bonnet and an enormous umbrella.²

France was desirous to attract dame England's attention to other difficulties than these of her own. To fill, in some manner, the gap occasioned by the Government's withholding of the official documents, the Comte de Gramont sent to neutral England on the twenty-first a circular explanatory of the French course of action. The circular referred to assurances given a year before by the Prussian Under Secretary, von Thile, that Leopold would never seriously become a candidate for the Spanish throne, and to the Emperor's impression that, irrespective of this, negotiations to that end had for some time been carried on under Bismarck's direction. In discussing the much mooted encounter on the Kursaal promenade, it declared that the King was addressed only because Bismarck had made himself inaccessible. The Prussian answer to the circular evaded details, confining itself to a dignified denial that the candidacy had been discussed by Prussian officials and Benedetti after they had become aware of the Spanish offer. This, as the *Standard* and the *Morning Post* pointed out, was in no way a refutation of Benedetti's statement as to what had happened in 1869. At that time, the papers said, the crown had not been formally offered but assurances

¹ Granville to Lyons, July 21, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, pp. 68-69.

² Described in *Saturday Review* of May 27, 1871.

had been given that would preclude such an eventuality. These had not been observed, since by the King's admission, the candidacy had received royal consent after consultation with Bismarck.¹

The circular had no very apparent influence on British opinion. The Kinglake Napoleon, which to most Islanders was the true one, was not a man to have been outplayed in diplomacy by a rough Prussian, who, it was thought, knew little but the berserker methods of blood and iron. As the *Globe* complained,² the press continued its onesided policy in regard to the war, printing much nonsense in support thereof. Napoleon, it was declared, like Alexander, had been jealous that there might appear two suns in the heavens.³ The fifty thousand "noes" of the army in the recent plebiscite had set him on the quest for Prussian blood, and with a fe, fi, fo, fum he had smelled it in this affair of the Hohenzollern princeling. The impression remained that, as the *Saturday Review* phrased it, Napoleon, on the slenderest provocation, had committed one of the greatest of crimes,⁴ and that France had disgraced herself by submitting to the will of this "wretched man." Papers like the *Morning Advertiser* and the canny *Scotsman*, that reviewed Prussia's conduct toward Denmark and Austria unfavorably, regretted that, were she punished for past offenses, it must be at the hands of an impious adversary.⁵ A respectable minority, comprising the *Standard*, the *Globe*, the widely read *Telegraph*, the *Tablet*, *Lloyd's Weekly*, and *News of the World*, could only buffet hopelessly against the tide.

¹ Issues of July 25, 1870.

² *Globe* of July 25, 1870.

³ *Illustrated London News*, July 23, 1870.

⁴ *Saturday Review*, July 23, 1870.

⁵ Issues of July 23, 1870.

It has been said with reason that if a lie be allowed twenty-four hours start nothing can catch it. It is not surprising, then, that when the official correspondence was laid before Parliament, almost a fortnight after the Ems episode, it had scarcely more influence than the Gramont circular, and, indeed, by many of the journals was completely ignored. Events of the week before last could not compete in interest with other very startling news, which we shall see was astutely laid before the public on the day before the documents were made available. It is doubtful, even, whether members of Parliament occupied themselves very much with despatches that ten days before would have had a very vivid interest. Earl Russell was certainly drawing his information from other sources when he laid himself open to the Earl of Malmesbury's correction by asserting that Benedetti had declined discussion with Bismarck and insisted on dealing directly with the King.¹ Lord Granville, in acknowledging that much turned on the misreading of the Ems incident, rigorously forebore to intimate by which side the misreading had been contrived.² Documents that in a court of law could not but have proven valuable to French interests received substantially no analysis by the leaders of Parliament.

Nor was the public more discriminating. It was equally pleased with Charles Lever, who described Napoleon as a second Sir Lucien O'Trigger,³ and with Mrs. Malaprop, who misquoted Lever and called the Emperor Sir Lucien Intriguer. Lord Lyons complained to Granville of a disposition on the part of the public to "attribute everything to deep laid plots and schemes," which induced them to

¹ Session of July 28, 1870, Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciii, p. 1061.

² Session of July 28, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. cciii, p. 1054.

³ Lever, *O'Dowd Papers*, Blackwood's, Sept., 1870, vol. cviii, p. 360.

suppose the war a foregone conclusion. This, he was sure, was not true in the case of France. Even at the last moment, he claimed, she would have left the door open to the mediation of a congress, had it not been for the appearance of the momentous article in the *North German Gazette*.¹ The press verdict on the Official Correspondence was that Granville had played a rôle eminently dignified but somewhat useless. French partisans blamed his severity, when after the dubious withdrawal of the Prince, he had charged the French Government with the "tremendous responsibility of insisting on a mere point of form."² They pointed to Bismarck's unrebuked refusal to submit to the King, Granville's memorandum to Bernstorff, which had aimed at effecting a settlement injurious to the dignity of neither country.³

The French *Journal Officiel* of July the thirty-first gave the close analysis of the British *Blue Book* that the London papers omitted, and urged that, should its interpretation be considered biased, the doubter should resort to the documents themselves.⁴ It cannot be believed that this advice caused the pages to be ruffled very considerably. Even the leisurely contributors to the magazines were offenders on the score of heedlessness. There occurs no newspaper article so absolutely contemptuous of the facts set forth in the *Blue Book* as a discussion appearing in *Fraser's* for August, which denied that the war was preceded by "any correspondence, demands, or ultimatum," whatsoever.⁵ In

¹ Lyons to Granville, July 31, 1870.

² *Daily Telegraph*, July 28, 1870.

³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, July 28, 1870; *Manchester Guardian*, July 28, 1870.

⁴ Translation of extracts from *Journal Officiel*, *Brit. State Papers* for 1870, vol. lxx, pp. 59-61.

⁵ *Fraser's New Series*, vol. ii, pp. 266 *et seq.*, "The Causes of the War."

Blackwood's Magazine for the next month, Charles Lever hits off ludicrously the persistent belief in French intrigue by a dialogue between Napoleon and his Foreign Minister.

"Better than all that," whispered M. de Gramont. "There's a forty-ninth cousin of the King wishes to be King of Spain. Prim told it to a lady who knows the Prince Carlo de Bourbon, who told it to the Duke of Lucca, who told it to me."

"Admirable, nothing could be better," muttered his Majesty, and between his teeth, went on, "honour of France, integrity of our Empire, inordinate ambition, and throne of Charles V! I'd like to see an English dispatch reply to that!"¹

It was not until the war was well lost by the Emperor, and Paris was besieged, that it began to be believed that the whispering and muttering might have been on the Prussian side. The *Times*, on the last day of December, speaks of the candidature as a pretext which had been for some time kept in reserve, perhaps with the malicious connivance of the North German Chancellor. The annual supplement to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, published also in December, gives a fairly comprehensive history of the affair on the Spanish side, mentioning Señor Rances' visit to Berlin in March of 1869 and his interview with Bismarck; the subsequent assurance given by von Thile to Benedetti in the same month; the Düsseldorf negotiations of Señor Salazar with Prince Leopold in February of 1870, and the Spaniard's discreet admission that Prussia had not interfered with the affair. The reviewer hazards the conjecture that, though history was not explicit on the spring and summer negotiations of 1870, "hardly anything less than the consciousness that the army of the North German Confederation was on his side, could have sustained General Prim in the daring position he persisted in when he maintained his advocacy of Prince Leopold, in spite of French objections." He be-

¹ *O'Dowd Papers, Blackwood's*, vol. cviii, p. 353.

lieved that Bismarck knew both of the offer and its acceptance, though the King was wilfully left in ignorance.¹

Even to this day the affair wears still its cloak of mystery. Bernhardt's memoirs significantly omit the interesting chapter that should have dealt with the secret mission he undertook to Spain at Bismarck's behest, and the memoirs of Bismarck, Moltke, and Roon are no more communicative on the subject. Lord Acton, who, it is said, knew the banker through whom the transaction was effected, is authority for the statement that a large sum of Prussian bonds were transferred to Madrid while the Cortes was discussing the question of the Spanish succession.²

As to the "gravamen of the offence,"—the inflammatory version of the telegram from Ems and its immediate publication,—Bismarck, himself, has long since admitted—even boasted—that by clever excisions of the King's despatch he had converted, as Moltke put it, a summons to a parley into a fanfare, and by the personally conducted and widespread publicity given the edited telegram had waved a "red flag before the Gallic bull." But his admission was reserved for the nineties. Nor did the French Minister publish his version of the affair in time to influence British opinion during the conduct of the war.³

Something of direct connivance, however, was suspected in England after Prussia's victories had proven her preparedness. David Urquhart and more than one of his followers, writing in pamphlets, and in the *Diplomatic Review*, and the *Anglo-American Times*, noted with mistrust the justification Bismarck gave when, on second thought, he

¹ "Story of the War," *Gentleman's Annual* for 1870, pp. 1 et seq.

² Acton, *Historical Essays and Studies* (London, 1907), p. 204; Lady John Russell, *A Memoir*, pp. 228-229; Marriott, *England Since Waterloo*, p. 423.

³ Comte Vincent Benedetti, *Ma mission en Prusse*, Paris, Oct., 1871.

accepted a modicum of the applause and congratulations of the Prussian soldiery. "Gentlemen," he said, "I have done nothing to obtain the success . . . but wait for a moment—I have done one thing. I have so acted that the Southern States of Germany have aided us with all their power."¹ Urquhart and his disciples beclouded their analyses and conjectures with much ado about Russia's share in the negotiations. Many thought that they did but bespatter Prussia in their efforts to paint Russia with a more lavish blackness. It resulted that their revelations were glossed over by the British public. Only when they reappeared so late as March, 1871, (all too late to be of practical advantage to France) and were strengthened by a searching analysis of the Official Correspondence, did they receive due weight. The discussion of "Scrutator," in a pamphlet entitled, *Who is Responsible for the War*,² aroused widespread attention. By the Germans, he was believed to have been either Gladstone, himself, or someone speaking for him.³ British reviewers described him as a well known advocate of Gladstone's ecclesiastical policy.⁴ The semi-official quality and the brilliance of the writer's argument caused credence to be given to his account of the war's contriving. "The Chancellor published in his own organ," says "Scrutator," "and communicated to the Governments of Europe, an incident which never took place, but which had the immediate effect of precipitating war."

¹ Issues respectively of Jan. 2, 1871, and Nov. 19, 1870.

² The pamphlet was the outcome of a controversy waged between "Scrutator" and Prof. Max Müller in the *Times*.

³ *North German Correspondent*, quoted in *John Bull*, March 25, 1871.

⁴ He was believed by some to have been Count Gasparin.

CHAPTER V

PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT TREATY

THAT much of British sympathy was diverted from France at the war's inception was due not to any evaluation of the merits of her case, nor to the connection existing between the Prussian and English Royal families, nor to a revival of the traditional hatred of France nor indiscriminate fear of her aggrandizement, but to a very tender regard for the little country of Belgium, whose great port of Antwerp, were it possessed by any but a neutral Power, would sorely menace the safety of John Bull's tight little island.¹ It was feared that during the course of the war the security guaranteed Belgium by the Treaties of 1831, 1839 would be endangered by French aggression, and that, in the event of Prussian defeat, it would become necessary for England to form a second line of European defence against an unscrupulous France.

On July the fifteenth, M. de Gramont had made the spontaneous declaration to Belgium that, should war take place, the Government would continue to respect her neutrality.² News of this had been duly communicated to the British Ministry by Lord Lyons, but before it was received Gladstone, already, had sent enquiries to his Minister of War as to the readiness with which England could send twenty thousand men to Antwerp.³ It was only a far

¹ *Spectator*, July 23, 1870.

² *British State Papers for 1870*, Foreign Series, vol. lxx, pp. 40-41.

³ Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, p. 339. Sir Robert Morier claims that England went so far as to discuss with other Governments the feasibility of her sending troops to Antwerp.

outlook, however, he told Cardwell in a later communication, which brought into view the possibility of having to send such an expedition.¹ Be that as it may, the French Ambassador became so much alarmed at rumours of these military considerations as to report to his Government that they had been the subject of discussion in the Cabinet, and to remark, in passing, that a British occupation of Antwerp would be a strange way of showing respect for Belgian neutrality.²

One can imagine, then, what discomfort was felt by Gladstone and Granville when, shortly after the declaration of war, the Prussian Ambassador, von Bernstorff, informed them of a treaty drafted in the handwriting of M. Benedetti which provided for the absorption of Belgium by France.³ While the British Ministers had the matter under advisement, the Ambassador entrusted the treaty to Baron Krause, who on the night of July the twenty-fourth carried it to the rooms of the editor of the *Times* at Serjeant's Inn.⁴ Mr. Delane was selected by Count Bismarck to be the bearer of its ill-tidings not only because he controlled the most influential of London journals but because he was believed to have an intense dislike of the French Emperor. This aversion, which, the *Standard* claimed, grew out of Napoleon's refusal to aid the *Times* in a trade

¹ Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. .

² Lyons to Granville, Paris, July 19, 1870, Newton, *Lord Lyons*, vol. i, pp. 301-302.

³ Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 340.

⁴ Cook, *Delane of the Times* (London, 1915), pp. 226-227; Count Andreas Bernstorff, Second Secretary to the Prussian Embassy, claims that it was he who carried the Draft Treaty to Delane at the *Times* office, *The Bernstorff Papers*, Dr. Karl Ringhoffer, *Life of Count Albrecht von Bernstorff* (London, 1908), vol. ii, pp. 275-276; in Hunt and Poole, *op. cit.*, it is said that Bismarck gave the Draft Treaty to the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, vol. ii, p. 263.

speculation,¹ had lately been intensified by the decision of the French that no newspaper correspondents might accompany their armies,² and by their recent arrest of one of the *Times*' men who had made a soldier drunk at Metz to worm from him forbidden information.³ Baron Krause knew that he would unfold his tale to willing ears. The document he had to show was undated. He supplied the information that its date was 1866. It was unsigned, but he assured the editor that the handwriting was that of the nefarious envoy who had conducted himself so shabbily at Ems. Delane read, copied, and published at once.⁴ Not only did he stand sponsor for the anonymous treaty which had been left on his doorstep but he accepted *in toto* all that the bearer told him of its origin and history. His editorial of the twenty-fifth succeeded in exciting almost more of alarm than did the treaty itself: "We might easily deduce from internal evidence," says this astute editor, "if we were not otherwise assured of the truth, that the proposed Treaty was submitted to Prussia by France as a basis for

¹ *Standard*, July 26, 1870; *Anglo-American Times*, Aug. 6, 1870.

² *Globe and Traveller*, July 28, 1870. Felix Whitehurst, when he attempted to gain the Emperor's permission for Dr. Russell to go to the front, met with a courteous but positive refusal. Napoleon remarked that Gortchakoff had told him that during the war in the Crimea, the War Office at St. Petersburg was always perfectly *au courant* with what was going on at British headquarters through the brilliant communications forwarded to the *Times* by this same Dr. Russell. *Life and Adventures of George Augustus Sala* (N. Y., 1895), vol. ii, p. 154. The French refusal caused the British Government temporarily to deny permission to Capt. Hozier, another of the *Times*' correspondents, to start for the Prussian Army. Delane, indignant at such careful neutrality, wrote to Dasent that the Ministry were mean-spirited and white-livered. Dasent, *John Delane* (N. Y., 1908), vol. ii, pp. 266-268.

³ *Tablet*, July 28, 1870.

⁴ *Times*, July 25, 1870. Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, pp. 39-40.

the removal of all difficulties that threatened to interrupt peace between them . . . It was rejected, but unless we are misinformed, and speaking with all reserve on a subject of such importance we are satisfied that our information is correct,—the Treaty has been again offered as a condition of peace. The suggestion has not been favourably received.”

The editorial of the accommodating Delane gave more éclat to the Treaty's publication in London than it enjoyed in its own country. It appeared in Berlin on the same day with no such addition of authoritative assurances. But even without the sauce of editorial comment, it was sure to prove a provoking tidbit.¹ Its terms provided that the North German Confederation and all acquisitions by Prussia be recognized by the Emperor; that the King of Prussia consent to the acquisition of Luxemburg by France; that the Emperor agree to a more intimate union of the governments of North and South Germany; that the King of Prussia consent to a French invasion of Belgium, and join with the Emperor in an offensive and defensive alliance, and in giving a reciprocal guarantee of his dominions.

One can imagine that Paterfamilias in reading the news of this Monday morning saw trouble ahead and did not linger for a second cup of coffee before setting out for the City. If it so happened that he met on the way one of his neighbours who was a reader of the *Daily Telegraph* an interesting dialogue must have taken place. The neighbour would have been keen on discussing an interview that his paper carried between the Emperor and two Englishmen in Paris.² Napoleon had spoken very frankly in his effort to get his case before the British. He told them he had been sure he could so handle the controversy as to make

¹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. ccciii, col. 955.

² *Daily Telegraph*, July 25, 1870.

peace certain, but "France had slipped out of his hand." He had thought that to present his position clearly as to the Hohenzollern candidature was the best means of averting the war that he knew himself not prepared for. He reverted to the difficulties he had been facing ever since Bismarck, in 1866, had refused to reward his friendly neutrality by permitting him to acquire Luxemburg and certain small towns which menaced his frontier. And then he amazed his interviewers by saying that Bismarck had qualified his refusal by enquiring of M. Benedetti what *quid pro quo* would satisfy France were Prussia to annex Holland,—an enquiry that brought a threat of war from the French envoy and terminated the interview.

If the neighbour chanced to be a person of importance and knew some of the secrets of the British Foreign Office, he may have remembered that, in 1865, the Danish Minister told the British Ambassador to his country that Bismarck had communicated to him this same wish to acquire Holland,—a country which, he said, attracted Prussia not only because of her coast-line but because of her colonies. France, Bismarck had said, could then take Belgium,—“since a guarantee was in these days of little value.”¹ It cannot be supposed that Paterfamilias, whose digestion was still disturbed by the news in his own paper, allowed his neighbour to unburden himself of many of his fears and surmises before he quite astonished him by pointing out the more startling revelations in the *Times*. Napoleon had reported a conversation, which had admittedly been terminated. Prussia had communicated a treaty, which she claimed had been urged on her very recently with the effect of precipitating the present war. Small wonder that, as the *Scotsman* complained, the British almost wholly disregarded the statement of Napoleon.

¹ Morley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 320.

It is our business to heed the voice of the pack, so, like Paterfamilias, we will clutch the *Times* closer and plunge down into the City. The stock market, a ready barometer of public opinion, was in dire confusion. Consols were especially unsteady. At least six members of the Exchange faced positive ruin. The day's parliamentary session was barren of relief. News came that Gladstone had said nothing to clarify the situation,—had contented himself with the climactic declaration that the document was of a nature to excite attention and even astonishment,—one whose character was such that it might be deemed incredible.¹

Lord Granville, on the day following, laid before the Lords the official correspondence that preceded the war. Prussia's astutely timed publication of the Treaty made these documents about as interesting as the dusty papers of a neglected wastebasket. The Honorable Members were immensely more interested in the report he gave of a conversation he had just had with the French Ambassador. M. de Lavalette admitted that the document all were discussing had, indeed, been written by Benedetti, but claimed it had originated with Bismarck. So far as France was concerned the Treaty was only a souvenir of an incident long closed. He reminded Granville that his country had assured Belgium before the war's outbreak that her neutrality would be respected, and had communicated this declaration to Lord Lyons.² That Ambassador, on the day Lord Granville was making this report in Parliament, received renewed assurances from Gramont, who told him Bismarck had not only prepared the Treaty but had offered that, in case France feared the odium of occupying Belgium, Prussia would undertake the occupation and then retire in apparent deference to her remonstrances. Lord Lyons

¹ Session of July 25, Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciii, p. 885.

² *Ibid.*, vol. cciii, pp. 925-926.

was of the opinion that the *Times* was misinformed when it claimed the Treaty had been the basis of recent discussion.¹

The statement of the Foreign Secretary to Parliament greatly pleased the *Standard*, which had warned its Conservative readers that very morning against giving credit to what seemed "a poor squib—the work of some Englishman unaccustomed to the employment of the French language"—a something its rival had published to add fuel to a flame already blazing and to lure England into hostilities against France.² Somewhat to cool this flame it reprinted a series of gossip sketches that had appeared in its columns in August of 1866, detailing such schemes as we heard our friend of the *Telegraph* striving to communicate to Paterfamilias on the day the Treaty was published.³ The *Morning Post* joined the *Standard* in denouncing its powerful contemporary's attempt to damage France by such dubious means. It pointed out that the King of Prussia was set forth in the Treaty as the first contracting party, and that according to diplomatic usage this alone was proof of its Prussian origin.⁴ But it must be admitted that the *Record* was just when it characterized the *Morning Post* as "notoriously French."

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, guileless of such favouritism, more nearly expressed the popular opinion when it complained that "during the entire period within which this proposal must have been made, England has been on terms of cordial friendship with the French nation. It is startling to find that all this time the French Government was contemplating an enterprise which England could not have

¹ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 303-304.

² Issue of July 26, 1870.

³ Issue of July 27, 1870.

⁴ *Record*, July 26, 1870.

suffered to go unopposed without sacrificing her dignity and putting her future independence in peril.”¹ *Saunders*’, trying hard to transplant this British attitude on the stubborn soil of Ireland, declared that the document precluded any further trust in France, and, whereas the editor of *Pall Mall* had advocated armed neutrality, *Saunders*’ improved upon his ardour by advocating “positive hostility.”²

The *Daily News*, however, which had been as zealously critical of France as these two of its contemporaries, was not so sure that the revelation reacted solely to her discredit. It observed that a rogue does not go straight to an honest man and propose that he become his accomplice.³ This was the view, too, of the *Evening Mail*,⁴ and of the *Record*, that modified the metaphor by describing the intriguers as two burglars sitting down beforehand to arrange how a profitable robbery might be committed with impunity.⁵

The *Manchester Examiner*, likewise, concluded that the index fingers of two hands would be needed to point the guilty man. It believed Count Bismarck had done his cause no good by showing himself to be more versed in the wiles and guile of diplomacy than had been thought.⁶ Its rival the *Manchester Guardian* pointed both fingers, too, and wagged its head at the British Foreign Office that had been deceived into confidence while Napoleon and Count Bismarck quietly discussed how best to make Holland, a Prussian, and Belgium, a French, province.⁷ It was the morning after the Treaty appeared that John Stuart Mill expressed his com-

¹ Issue of July 25, 1870.

² Issue of July 27, 1870.

³ Issue of July 26, 1870.

⁴ Issue of July 26, 1870.

⁵ Issue of July 27, 1870.

⁶ Issue of July 27, 1870.

⁷ Issue of July 26, 1870.

plete approval of a demonstration Sir Charles Dilke and others of the Liberals were sponsoring. He hoped they would take this opportunity of assuring Prussia that Great Britain considered her as defending her own and the liberty of Europe, and that she, herself, recognized her obligations to Belgium, and was convinced that, were France victorious, she would, in her turn, be attacked as the "fourth of the Great Powers that fought at Waterloo."¹

On the morning of the twenty-seventh, the *Times* published a letter of M. Emile Ollivier's which categorically denied the portentous claim that any recent negotiations had taken place on the basis of the notorious Treaty.² Somewhat later, the Foreign Office published a slender sheaf of documents dealing with the matter.³ For scandal mongers in diplomacy this second *Blue Book* was most interesting. The musty acorn of a rejected treaty had produced a whole forest of phantom, but very shady, negotiations for the parcelling out of those smaller European states that were Great Britain's particular care. Not to enter too deeply into its bosky recesses, it will suffice to say that Prussia and France were equally voluble and recriminatory. Each claimed to have valiantly withstood the assiduous temptations of the other—Bismarck keeping the guilty secrets "for the sake of peace,"⁴—even though he saw England beguiled by the French into proposing a disarmament which was intended to make possible these nefarious schemes. Though accommodatigly vocative, the Chancellor was not always consistent. For instance, after instructing his agent, Baron Krause, to give the Treaty's date as 1866,⁵ he

¹ Mill to Henry Fawcett, July 26, 1870, *Letters of John Stuart Mill* (London, 1910), vol. ii, pp. 266-267.

² *Vide* also, *Standard*, July 28, 1870.

³ *Brit. State Papers* of 1870, vol. lxx, pp. 47-71.

⁴ Bismarck's telegram to Bernstorff, July 28, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 40.

⁵ *Supra*, p. 89.

instructed Bernstorff to give the date to Granville as 1867;¹ and though writing his Ambassador that Benedetti, "of his own accord," amended Article II,² he himself told Lord Loftus that the amendment to this article was directly due to his own suggestion.³ What really interested the British was his claim that if the publication of the Treaty had not taken place, France would have proposed to Prussia after the completion of their preparations for war that they unite their armies against unarmed Europe for the carrying out of the Benedetti programme.⁴ The Treaty had been shown to Lord Loftus. It was soon to be photographed and published in the *Graphic*⁵ so that all who wished might read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. But were it only one of those dead drafts,—ghosts of dark plans that died aborning, which Morier claimed haunted the cupboards of all the Foreign Offices, it was not worth inspection. Only Count Bismarck's statement gave it interest and vitality. The veracity of the Prussian Minister became a matter of eager interest. Gramont's circular to the French agents abroad gave the same absolute denial to his claims that Ollivier had sent the *Times*.⁶ The press advanced its judgment for

¹ *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, p. 41.

² Bismarck to Bernstorff, July 29, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, pp. 67-69.

³ Loftus to Granville, July 30, 1870, *ibid.*, lxx, p. 70.

⁴ Bismarck to Bernstorff, July 29, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxx, p. 69.

⁵ Supplement to issue of Aug. 20, 1870.

⁶ Dated, Aug. 4, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, pp. 88-90; for Benedetti's account of the affair, *vide Ma mission en Prusse*. The French instructions to Benedetti in regard to the negotiations of 1866-1867, it is claimed, were discovered and acquired by the Germans in Cercay, M. Rouher's chateau, during the War of 1870. The collection is said to have included the original of the famous Draft Treaty, annotated by the Emperor himself. To provide against the intervention of England, Antwerp was to have been declared a free city. *Vide* George Hooper, *Campaign of Sedan*. The recent Treaty of Versailles provides that the papers be returned to France.

the guidance of the public. The *Daily Telegraph* thought from the evidence in the case one might assign the rôle of Satan, with equal propriety, to either of the dark actors in the late drama;¹ *Once a Week* saw the Treaty as the work of two armed pickpockets;² the *Quarterly Review* with more circumspection observed, none the less, that Bismarck's past record did not exclude him from the Rogues' fraternity;³ while *Judy*, in biblical vein, suggested that these plots to gobble up the little nations reminded her of Aaron's rod that swallowed up all the other rods. She warned the author of the scheme to take care that his little essay in the rod business did not turn out badly for his own back.⁴ The *Manchester Guardian* commended Bismarck for having so wisely followed the advice of a lawyer to an inconstant lover and made most violent promises but communicated them only to the air.⁵ The *Northern Whig* contrasted his loquacity with the reticence of the Duke of Marlborough on the occasion of an unworthy offer that had been made to him. The example of the great Duke should have been followed. If the proposals were so dishonorable as Bismarck and his Government now claimed, how came they for four years to be repeated?⁶ The *Court Journal* believed the French version of the affair and frankly hoped the previous kindly feelings for Prussia would be changed to cynical distrust.⁷

To the *Spectator*,⁸ it seemed that, although Bismarck was

¹ Issue of July 30, 1870.

² Issue of Aug. 6, 1870.

³ Issue of Oct., 1870.

⁴ Aug. 3, 1870.

⁵ Issue of Aug. 2, 1870.

⁶ Issue of July 30, 1870.

⁷ Issue of July 30, 1870.

⁸ Issue of July 30, 1870.

blameable for secrecy, it was France that had been guilty of "an almost matchless perfidy." The *Economist*, likewise ignoring French denials, believed that the rejection of the Treaty and not the Hohenzollern candidature was the true cause of the war.¹ *Judy* had proclaimed Prince Leopold the "lion of the season." He had sunk to a puppet, and now was only a makeshift. The *London Graphic* saw an argument for Prussian righteousness in the fact that the Treaty was so clearly favourable to France.² The *Telegraph* thought the flaw of secrecy should be overlooked since Prussia was too weakened after the Austrian war to have opposed France with decision.³

The *Illustrated London News* stands out with equal clearness from the critics of both France and Prussia. It took the unique position that neither had yielded to temptation to any greater extent than would have "England or any other European Power in the same circumstances." It was the foe of excessive armaments. They produced an assurance of strength that induced nations to gratify their desires,—no matter how savage such desires might be. What a nation could do, it would readily find justification for doing.⁴

Its opinion was unique not only in that it pointed to its own country as capable of similar dark traffickings, but that it raised its voice at this time against national armaments. Its contemporaries were vociferous in urging Britannia into armor. The *Manchester Guardian* represents John Bull as saying to a protesting Bismarck: "Well, I'm sure I don't know. Nap says he wrote that letter at your dicta-

¹ Issue of July 30, 1870.

² Issue of July 30, 1870.

³ Issue of Aug. 20, 1870.

⁴ Issue of Aug. 18, 1870.

tion. I'll tell you there's been queer dealings between you two fellows of which I don't half know yet. It seems to me you're two big thieving blackguards; not a pin to choose between you, and that the best thing for me to do is to look after my own goods and chattels."¹ *Punch* won an approving smile when he turned the matter into verse:

"Bismarck against Napoleon! Who the odds will give or take,
Which of the two more lightly his faith will bind or break?
'Arcades ambo—blackguards both!' says John Bull's low'ring eye
As he puts his trust in Providence—and keeps his powder dry."²

Those who enjoyed the ramifications into iniquity with which *Fraser's Magazine*³ occupied itself to the disparagement of France, and the long-winded accusatory letters that found space in the *Times*, regretted that the journals briefly agreed to disagree on the apportionment of guilt and set about congratulating themselves on the unanimity of their agreement to force dame England to discard her coal-scuttle bonnet and crinolines for a suit of shining armour. When energy can be expended in action words become few. The *Annual Register* marvelled at the "rapidity with which the story of the secret treaty was assigned to oblivion."⁴

Perhaps its demise was hastened by the keen shafts of wit of the jokesters. Charles Lever in his O'Dowd papers satirizes the Billingsgate attitude of the disputants in this fashion:

I'll show the Belgians what you did by them, says Bismarck; and I'll show the Dutch what a pleasant destiny was to have been theirs, replied the Duke de Gramont. Will you have the face to deny that you did not mean to annex part of Piedmont and

¹ Issue of Aug. 3, 1870.

² Aug. 6, 1870.

³ Cf. *The War*, appearing in the Sept. issue.

⁴ *Annual Register* for 1870, vol. cxii, p. 95.

the Maritime Alps? asks Bismarck. Will you kindly furnish the Florentine Government with the military report from the staff officers of the Italian army when they were your allies? Did you, or did you not offer us 300,000 men in the war against Austria? ¹

Judy provoked merriment by stating the revelations of the week in an amusing chronology:

Aug., 1870. Monday—Count Bismarck publishes a draft treaty, in Count Benedetti's handwriting, proposing the annexation of Belgium by France. (N. B. Benedetti's pen wiper and pocket handkerchief marked with the Imperial arms, and left behind him, can be seen at the Berlin Foreign Office, as evidence that Bismarck was the lamb and Count Benedetti the wolf in this transaction.)

Tuesday—Bismarck publishes another secret treaty, in which France proposes to annex Austria, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and a few other countries, and allows Prussia to take the coast of Greenland as an equivalent. (Refused with virtuous indignation.)

Wednesday—A third document published at Berlin showing a proposal of France to annex the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; and the Gulf Stream, and the Papal States; offering the Pope a kiosque and the privilege of selling newspapers in the Paris boulevards.

Thursday—Bismarck prints another secret proposal that France should seize Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia, and Bismarck, Great Britain (if he could persuade the people there to let him have it). Rejected with dignity.

Friday—The German Official Gazette contains a further secret treaty, under which the French agree to take Paris, and the Prussians to march on Berlin. (Temporized with.)

Saturday—Further revelations. French prepared to annex the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, allowing Prussia to take the North and South Poles. (Rejected immediately.)

Sunday—Spent by Bismarck at the Berlin Foreign Office, rum-maging up a lot more revelations for next week.²

¹ *Blackwood's*, Sept., 1870.

² *Bismarck's Diplomatic Revelations*, in issue of Aug. 31, 1870.

It is not surprising that the cotton-wool Government that had been conducting its retrenchments largely at the expense of the army and navy felt themselves forced to a right-about-face. Gladstone had been striving for a secure neutrality,—one which would manifest “unequivocal friendliness” to each belligerent.¹ The Draft Treaty and its revelations made it apparent that the only secure neutrality was an armed one, and that the attitude of the mutual friend had better be exchanged for that of a potential disciplinarian. John Bright was ill, but his brother, Jacob, spoke for him in opposition to the idea that England should arm herself for the defence of another,—even though that other was a nation whose neutrality she had guaranteed.² He, himself, wrote to Gladstone, censuring his backsliding from Manchester principles, and even intimating that such dereliction might induce his resignation.³ But the Quaker brothers were in a hopeless minority. Only seven members in the House of Commons voted against furnishing the means for additional land forces. The Government was strengthened by a vote of credit to the amount of £2,000,000 for the supporting of British neutrality and the discharging of any obligation that might devolve on it. It cannot be claimed that the Government had shown any enthusiasm in the alacrity with which it had to respond to the popular demand. Mr. Gladstone was described as lukewarm, and almost horrified at the term “armed neutrality.”⁴

The honours of the debate went to Mr. Bernal Osborne and to Disraeli. The first sneered at a Foreign Office that had allowed “the most material event that ever happened

¹ *Annual Register*, vol. cxii, p. 100.

² *Spectator*, Aug. 13.

³ Macaulay Trevelyan, *Life of John Bright* (London, 1913), p. 417.

⁴ *Annual Register*, cxii, pp. 100-102.

in the history of diplomacy" to be learned from the columns of the *Times*. He was impatient of the position of entire nullity which her powerful neighbours had assigned to England and welcomed Disraeli's advocacy of armed neutrality.¹ "There are vast ambitions abroad in Europe," Disraeli warned the uneasy Prime Minister. "This is no time to be weak." British neutrality should be "assured,"—dowered with such strength that it could make itself respected. A cordial understanding with Russia, he believed, would do much to strengthen England against that time when it might be necessary to counsel the belligerents and bring them to peace.²

Disraeli's words and those of other speakers in the House suggested the belief that it was France who needed chiding and would later need counselling.³ This attitude was regretted by Sir Henry Bulwer, who counted the years of his friendship for France with the same tally that he counted the years of his life. He made no effort to exculpate her for having provoked the present conflict, but he expressed fear that she might be the victim of her own rash enterprise. And, reminding her critics that she had been the firm ally of Great Britain on the field of battle and at the great councils of Europe, expressed his hope that when occasion came for friendly mediation, they would "arrest the horrors of war in a country so eminent in the arts of peace, and save from the still greater horrors of tumult and revolution a capital that is the pride and ornament of the whole world."⁴

¹ *Annual Register*, vol. cxii, p. 103.

² *Ibid.*, vol. cxii, pp. 98-100; *Weekly Freeman's Journal*, Aug. 6, 1870; *Daily News*, Aug. 3, 1870; Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. v, pp. 126 *et seq.*

³ Speeches of Messrs. Taylor, White and Beaumont, session of Aug. 10, 1870, Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciii, col'ns 1741, 1782, 1784, respectively.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. cciii, col'ns 1780-1781.

In the House of Lords, the debates were not so vivid, partly because Lord Granville had proven more amenable to public opinion than had the Prime Minister. When Earl Russell urged that the Government should declare openly and explicitly the intention to be true to their treaties and faithful to their engagements, he was assured that nothing would prevent a scrupulous adherence to the Government's intentions whenever they had been clearly intimated.¹ So aroused was public opinion that had the Ministry not shown itself determined to ensure respect for Belgium, it was believed, it could not have lasted till the end of the session.²

Gladstone had given his endorsement to a new treaty of guarantee with much greater willingness than he had shown in the matter of increasing British armaments. On the thirtieth of July, the Cabinet met and decided to propose for the signature of France and Prussia identic treaties providing that in the event of the violation of Belgian neutrality by either of the two, Great Britain would coöperate with the other for its defence, with the stipulation that such action should not involve her in the general war. The British Government, in proposing these engagements, carefully refrained from any mention of the Draft Treaty or of subsequent revelations, and based its proposal on the fact that both Emperor and King, in the assurances they had recently given in regard to Belgium, had made reservations in the event of one or the other failing to respect the neutrality both had guaranteed. These conditional assurances, wrote Lord Granville, seemed to indicate that the declaration of each was incomplete. The new treaty was recommended as a means of removing the general anxiety "which at present not unnaturally disturbs the minds of

¹ *Annual Register*, vol. cxii, p. 105.

² *St. Paul's Magazine*, Sept., 1870, *The English Aspect of the War*, pp. 562 et seq.; Hunt and Poole, *op. cit.*, vol. xii, p. 263.

neutral Powers.”¹ Prussia gave her signature on the ninth and that of France was obtained two days later. The latter acquiesced with something of reluctance. She regarded the request for new assurances as impugning the honesty of the spontaneous declaration she had given Belgium shortly before the declaration of war. It seemed to her at least a partial triumph for Bismarck.² Austria and Russia, signatories of the Treaties of 1831, and '39, declined England's request to sign the present one, due to an objection to its provision for coercive measures. They thought it would be impossible to embark on a war to protect Belgium that would not widen out into a participation in the general hostilities.³

The treaty had its critics at home who made the same objection. Lord Cairns was one of these.⁴ Their view was stated in the press by the *Globe and Traveller*.⁵ Other of its critics were Bernal Osborne, who dubbed it a “childish perpetuation of diplomatic folly,” and Sir Robert Morier, who called it a document “monstrously absurd in which, with an ingenuity worthy of a better cause, England endeavours to make each belligerent believe that she is really only distrustful of the other, and in which she engages not to use her fleet, which is the only help any one cares about, and to employ her army only, which frightens Continentals about as much as an old horse pistol of the last century.”⁶

In Ireland, the jealous care of Belgium, to which the new

¹ Granville to Lyons, July 30, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxx, p. 55.

² *Ibid.*, vol. lxxx, pp. 56 *et seq.*; Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 41.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. lxxi, pp. 14-15.

⁴ *Annual Register*, vol. cxii, p. 107.

⁵ Issue of Aug. 9, 1870.

⁶ *Memoirs and Letters of the Hon. Sir Robert Morier* (London, 1911), vol. ii, pp. 206-208.

treaty bore witness, was matter for derision. The *Nation* criticized the inconsistency of a Power that enslaved Ireland, but fostered Belgium, and while guaranteeing the freedom of one nationality, perpetuated the subjection of another.¹ The pictures in *Fun*, representing England as coming to the rescue of those Babes in the Woods, Holland and Belgium, whom the two wicked uncles were fighting over; or in the guise of a benevolent bull-dog that slept with one eye open the better to guard little dog, Belgium, while France and Prussia fought behind the kennel,² gained only a wry smile from Patrick.

On the whole, however, the treaty received a hearty welcome. The Peers showed their content by almost immediately dropping the debate on foreign affairs. It was believed necessary by careful diplomatists who remembered the terms of the two previous arrangements for Belgian neutrality. The Treaty of 1839 specifically based itself on the first twenty-four articles of the Treaty of 1831. But the guarantee of the execution of the latter was contained in its twenty-fifth Article. Therefore the later treaty, which supplanted its predecessor, though containing a statement of Belgian neutrality in the Seventh Article of its Annex, had no specific guarantee for its execution.³ The *Spectator* found cause for rejoicing, not that a faulty treaty had been supplanted by a more distinct pronouncement but because it believed the newer an engagement was the more forceful was it. "'39 is a long while ago," it argued, "and we have guaranteed many things in our history which from effluxion of time or change of circumstances, or modifications in opinion, we certainly should make no effort to se-

¹ *The Nation*, Aug. 6, 1870.

² Issue of Aug. 13, 1870.

³ *Daily News*, issue of Aug. 6, 1870; Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. ii, pp. 881 *et seq.*, 996 *et seq.*

cure.”¹ It was suggesting a dangerous doctrine, and one which was to be turned against England herself by Russia in only a few months. Paterfamilias had more the attitude of the *Daily Telegraph*, and regarded the new treaty not as replacing engagements worn thin by time, but as reaffirming them, and giving recognition to a bond which England’s neighbours had considered she regarded but lightly.² As Sir Robert Morier said, he cherished “old fashioned ideas about England’s honour and such like fancies”³ and delighted in a treaty which made them manifest to the world. And so John Bull was all aglow with virtue at having foiled the plots of that “crowned swindler, Napoleon” and the “terrible German Chancellor” by a simple affirmation of his own honourable intentions,—a renewal of engagements which accorded, by happy chance, so splendidly with his own proper interests.⁴

¹ Issue of Aug. 6, 1870.

² Issue of Aug. 6, 1870.

³ Letter to Dr. Faucher, Sept. 19, 1870, Morier, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 180-181.

⁴ Ten days after the new treaty of guarantee was signed, the British Government advised the French to permit Prussia to transport the wounded through Belgium. On Aug. 24, 1870, Borthwick, the editor of the *Morning Post*, published an editorial in regard to this “Prussian intrigue.” He claimed that his exposure of the motives behind the project convinced Gladstone and Granville of their error in having yielded to the Prussian proposals and caused them to withdraw their sanction immediately. The *British State Papers* ignore this “triumph” of the *Post*. Vide, Reginald Lucas, *Lord Glenesk and the Morning Post* (London, 1910), pp. 239-240.

CHAPTER VI

FORMATION OF THE LEAGUE OF NEUTRALS

WHILE English tourists were scurrying home from the war zone, and Gladstone, in eloquent letters to his friends and a long speech at the Cobden Commemoration, was exercising all that skill at mingling philosophy with denunciation which the bonds of office had restrained in Parliament, those of the Tories and the old soldiers of the Crimea, who cherished for France such love as Bulwer had, busied themselves with maps, and speculations as to what course the war would take and what allies France might win for Prussia's undoing. The papers, full as they were of French and Prussian despatches, were, in George Meredith's phrasing, "mere chips of dry biscuit to the devouring appetite" of these partisans.¹ The time that the sheets would leave the press could not be stated, but telegraphic news was supplied by various agencies to clubs, and reading rooms, and even to "private addresses;" lectures on the geography of the war were given to workmen; maps at sixpence each found eager buyers. London was full of parlour strategists. It is related that one hostess was greatly perturbed at having a guest who had just seated himself at her dinner table exclaim emphatically to his neighbour, "I shall fall on the right wing and the left flank!" "Oh," said the lady, "then you will want at least half a fowl!"

¹ Letter to John Morley; Meredith had half-decided to start for French headquarters as a correspondent for the *Post*. *Letters of George Meredith* (N. Y., 1909-1912), vol. i, p. 209.

One of the papers said that a great Prussian squadron lay in the Mediterranean,¹ and would act as a deterrent to Italy, should she wish to join an old ally who had gained much for her and might under pressure be induced to cap his work by granting her her ancient capital.² However, should Count Beust swing Austria to the French side, Italy would think it better to fight with Austria and France than to stand by and watch them grow so strong from victory that they could punish her for her abstention. Austria, all knew, was smarting still under the terms of the Treaty of Prague, and only recently had shown the hurt in speaking of the "reckless selfishness" of Bismarck, and the "bad conscience" which his insistence on the railway across St. Gothard's Pass exhibited. The rumour was reported by Lord Lyons that Count Beust, though quite aware that nothing could be hoped for from South Germany, still trusted so much in French strength that on the day after War's declaration he concluded an informal alliance with France, promising her active aid by the middle of September, or somewhat later when the advent of winter should make it impossible for Russia to concentrate her forces for active intervention.³ Some said it was stipulated that France

¹ *Spectator*, July 9, 1870. The paper was in error as to the location of the fleet. In the *Bernstorff Papers* it is described as having been on its way from Plymouth to Madeira. It was saved from capture by a warning from the Ambassador himself. *Bernstorff Papers*, vol. ii, p. 275. When Prince Napoleon was sent to Italy in August, 1870, he, it is claimed, gained Victor Emmanuel's consent to ally himself with the Emperor on the condition that Italy be allowed to do as she pleased in regard to Rome. The Emperor refused to be a party to such an agreement. His defeats and the withdrawal of his forces from Italy made it possible for that country to occupy Rome without his consent. Fleury, *Memoirs of Empress Eugénie*, vol. ii, p. 275.

² *Times*, June 20, 1870, extract from *Neue Freie Presse*.

³ Lyons to Granville, Dec. 31, 1872, Newton, *Lord Lyons*, vol. ii, pp. 35-36.

should have a force at that time in Baden. These plans materializing, the advance on Berlin would be made after armies marching from the south and west had made a junction. There were others who regarded the Baltic with more of interest, and believed Prussia would be invaded by France from the north.¹

Four days before war was declared and when the British had just made their appeal to the Protocol of 1856, Lord Granville told the Minister of the Netherlands that in the event of war's outbreak, Great Britain would be neutral, and if she offered advice to other Powers it would be that they follow her example.² Queen Sophia of the Netherlands was German by birth but strongly French in sympathy, and, on the day that her Minister was interviewing Granville, was, herself, lamenting the death of Granville's predecessor, the Lord Clarendon, whom so many believed might have succeeded in preventing the war. She found it difficult even to show herself civil to the Prussian Minister and his British wife.³ It was not probable that a country ruled by a Queen so friendly to the French Court would interfere were Denmark to respond to French solicitations. The Duke of Cadore was at Copenhagen, urging the Danes to join their fleet with that of France and protect the landing of troops that might then march on Berlin from the north.⁴ There was much speculation in England as to whether Denmark would take a step so bold. The *Manchester Guardian* was of the opinion that, if she did, Eng-

¹ Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 42.

² Granville to Vice Admiral Harris, July 15, 1870.

³ Baroness de Bunsen, *In Three Legations* (London, 1909), pp. 335-336. For the untimeliness of Clarendon's death, see Sir Spencer Walpole, *History of Twenty-five Years*, vol. ii, p. 481; Lucas, *Lord Glenesk and the Morning Post*, p. 240; Redesdale, *Memoirs*, vol. ii, pp. 525-526.

⁴ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 42.

land, at least, could not blame her: "Europe looked on with apathy while the spoliation of Denmark was accomplished in 1864, and by a righteous retribution it is now involved in a conflict which would probably never have arisen if the neutral Powers had interfered to withstand the first onset of Prussian ambition. King Christian, observed the *Guardian*, "owes no gratitude to any of his allies."¹

But whether assistance was to come for France from the north or south, none but a few of the British doubted that Prussia would be the country invaded. The editor of the *Times* was ready to lay his shilling upon Casquette against Pumpernickel,² and the ears of von Bernstorff were assailed in the "most aristocratic and influential English clubs" by praise of the superior French valour.³ The statement of M. Rouher that credited the Emperor with four years of careful preparation was accepted at par value. Not without cause, it was thought, M. Ollivier had said that he embarked on this enterprise with a "light heart." A Minister of War, whose confidence was such that he could vouch for the last button on the last gaiter of his soldier's accoutrement, surely, was not to be caught napping. Guizot, in his retirement at Val Richer, assured Bishop Wilberforce that he knew the enemy's campaign would be to retreat and fight on the defensive. He thought Denmark would join France after her first victory and create a diversion from the north that would bring disaster to Prussian arms.⁴

It is true that Guizot's rival, the veteran Thiers, had de-

¹ Issue of Aug. 5, 1870; see also *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

² Cook, *Delane of the Times*, p. 280.

³ Bernstorff, *Im Kampfe für Preussens Ehre*, p. 618.

⁴ R. G. Wilberforce, *Life of Bishop Wilberforce* (London, 1878), vol. iii, p. 355.

clared before casting his vote against the war, that France was not yet ready; and that the Emperor, even more recently, had admitted as much in the interview the *Telegraph* had published on the day of the Draft Treaty's appearance.¹ Also the Prince Napoleon, who was listened to and disregarded by everyone, had shown himself much agitated by his country's conduct. He was cruising in the Baltic when he learned of the imminence of war and determined at once to return "to Charenton [the French Bedlam]; to that city of madmen which is shouting, to Berlin! and which is called Paris." There was the case, too, of the Jewish banker, who had grown rich in the French capital but left it for London, saying that it would be surrounded in a month. No one believed him. He committed suicide before he could forget the loss of his ducats in satisfaction at his foresight. Among the military, the doubters were General Ducrot, who had kept himself informed of what was going on across the Rhine, and Baron Stoffel, the French military attaché at Berlin in 1869, who knew more, and had made a remarkable report of his observations the preceding August.² On Marshal MacMahon's authority it can be said that Baron Stoffel's superiors had given no credence to revelations that, when reprinted in '71, read almost as though they were a series of reflections on what had happened.³

The British were avid for reports from their own countrymen and newspapers were more than eager to indulge them. At first, it had seemed the French would allow reporters to accompany them on their "promenade to Berlin," and many set out for Metz. But soon official re-

¹ *Supra*, chap. v, pp. 90, 91.

² Capt. the Hon. D. Bingham, *Recollections of Paris* (London, 1896), vol. i, p. 158.

³ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 50.

cognition was denied and some fared badly,—which in no wise increased their sympathy for the French cause.¹ However, by August the twelfth the Emperor so far modified his rules as to permit the presence of those correspondents on whom he thought he could rely. Prussia, on the other hand, had extended a really royal welcome to the gentlemen of the Fourth Estate. In Berlin, Dr. Russell of the *Times* was invited to the christening of the baby daughter of the Crown Princess and, on being presented to the King by the British Ambassador, was welcomed as the minister of a very important power—that of public opinion.² The continual favours showered on this famous correspondent, known to his admirers as “Billy Russell of the Crimea,” and to those who disliked him as “Bull Run,” provided good material for the fun makers, who claimed that when the gray-coated Doctor mounted his horse, it was customary for the gorgeously uniformed Crown Prince to hold his stirrup. He travelled *de luxe*, with secretaries and couriers, as befitted the representative of a journal that counted for more abroad than all the British press together. Special facilities were afforded him for getting his reports to the *Times* and the *Army and Navy Gazette*.³ The former paper was served, also, by Captain Hozier, who had ably reported the Sadowa campaign, and after delay again received his Government’s permission to accompany the Prussian armies. Others of the foreign staff were Alexander Inness Shand, whose subsequent volume on the war

¹ E. A. Vizetelly, *My Days of Adventure* (N. Y., 1914), pp. 56-57.

² W. H. Russell, *My Diary During the Last Great War* (London, 1874), p. 30.

³ Julian Kune, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile* (Chicago, 1911), pp. 205-206; Archibald Forbes, *Memories and Studies of War and Peace* (Leipzig, 1871), pp. 225-226; Vizetelly, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.

became popular; Charles Austin, who wrote from Paris; Frank Lawley, who contributed also to the *Telegraph*, and Mr. Dallas, whom the *Times* shared with the *News*. The paper's motto, John Bright complained in 1860, was *Omnia pro tempore, sed nihil pro veritate*—which he rendered, "Everything for the *Times*, but nothing for Truth."¹ These men reported events fully and accurately, but their chief prevented them from effecting any change in the paper's policy.

It was the *Daily News* that plucked the highest laurels during the war, and is said to have doubled its circulation. The brightest star in its constellation was Henry Labouchere, whose ironic wit gave him a vogue surpassing any of his competitors. It had the only woman reporter, Jessie White Mario, the widow of Garibaldi's companion in arms in the Liberation days; and Hilary Skinner, one of the few who were allowed special means of communication by the Prussian Staff; Crawford, who for long had written his newsletters at a little café fronting the Bourse, was another, as was the amusing Archibald Forbes.

For the *Standard*, there was the elderly but jaunty Bower, whose glossy top hat and buff waistcoat were more appropriate on the boulevards than in the camp, and who fortunately found matter for his pen without going afield.² In Paris, also, was J. Augustus O'Shea, a good fellow of an Irishman, not to be confused with the gay and eccentric G. Augustus Sala, who was not a Bohemian and went to law to prove it.

The *Telegraph* was popular also,—so much so that since it was always delivered late, newsdealers in Russell Square complained that they lost the sale of other

¹ *Speeches of Right Hon. John Bright, M. P.* (edited by Thorold Rogers, London, 1868), p. 500.

² Vizetelly, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

papers because many preferred to wait and scramble over its quickly exhausted edition. It had a larger circulation in London than any of its competitors and proudly flaunted the number of its subscribers in every copy. The men who helped to give it popularity were Felix Whitehurst, who saw everything through French glasses and made his diary speak with a Gallic accent; Beatty Kingston, "the best man in the world for German news;"¹ and Lord Adare,—later Earl of Dunraven, who had with him, perhaps as guard against mistakes in reporting a war in which always the unexpected happened, the famous mystic, Douglas Home, Browning's model for *Mr. Sludge, the Medium*.

Another titled correspondent was Sir Henry Havelock, whose scrupulosity in paying for what he needed did something to dispel the peasant's belief that England was at war with France.² The *Morning Post* was served by Thomas Gibson Bowles, whose precisely parted hair and trim moustache were the envy of the younger correspondents. There were, too, the three Vizetellys, father and sons, who reported for a number of papers; George T. Robinson, who got himself shut up in Metz to his advantage and that of the *Manchester Guardian*; Blanchard Jerrold, whose knowledge of the French spy system kept him in terror for the indiscretions of his brethren of the press;³ Captain Walker, former military attaché at the British Legation in Berlin; the irresponsible Lewis Wingfield, a free lance, who contributed to all and sundry; Jules Pilcoq, who imperturbably sketched battle scenes for the *Illustrated*; and Henry Mayhew, more fitted to write on economics than to follow a campaign.

¹ Bismarck at times accorded him very special privileges. See Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

² Kune, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

³ Vizetelly, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

These were some of the many to whose omnipresence it was due, as Sir Robert Morier complained, that the horrors of war were microscopically laid out to jostle the toast and muffins on every British breakfast table. With a similarity to that jolly character of Dickens', who was always drawing skeletons, these gay gentlemen contributed no jam for John Bull's muffins, and *Punch* and *Judy*, iest he should sup full of horrors, tempered their dolour by creating a "very special cockalorum," who gave himself all the airs of Dr. Russell, and a certain Ally Sloper, who consulted the canon for accurate information, and got himself into all sorts of escapades in his efforts to serve the British public. At one time he ridiculed the practice of the other papers by sending back instructions that *Judy* stick up a paper outside the shop with scareheads chronicling the loss of his famous umbrella, and later his own disappearance, together with his belongings, "inclusive of umbrella and white hat." "The umbrella and hat are right as ninepence, you'll be pleased to hear," wrote Ally privately; "but that don't matter, stick it up outside the shop, and it'll have 'em beautiful. Contradict everything next day, and pot 'em again the day after."¹

A certain suspicion that the Power that would be found first ready for war was the Power that had meant war all along, invested with unusual interest the reports that were sent back as to the mobilization of the belligerents. On the twenty-second of July, the correspondent for *Temple Bar* wrote from Coblenz that, though France had about 150,000 men at Châlons, they were not ready to take the field and were backed by no reserves. He estimated that it would require at least a fortnight or three weeks before they could undertake a campaign. Whereas, the Prussians, he believed, could assemble all their forces in eleven days. John

¹ *Judy*, Aug. 3, 1870.

Scott Russell had been assured it would be a matter of only ten days.¹ Shand, who wrote for the *Times*, relates that Moltke lay smoking a cigar when his aide-de-camp brought him news of the declaration of war. "I had hardly looked for it for a day or two," he said without rising—"Just have the goodness to open that drawer." Within an hour the necessary orders were flying to his subordinates in all parts of Germany.² On July the twenty-third, English reporters sent news that some twenty of the actors of the Passion Play at Ammergau had been called to the colours. Joseph Mair was the name of the peasant who played the part of Christ. He was a wood-carver, well over six feet in height, "gentle, modest, and deeply devoted." With the German regard for efficiency he was permitted to wear his long hair unshorn so that when he was mustered out of the artillery he might resume his rôle, if von Moltke's calculations went not awry and the work of battle was completed before the year expired.³

France, through the lamentable disorganization of her own system, could not but give her enemy an excess of the time required for mobilization. With what clock-like precision it was accomplished is apparent from the single statement that nineteen days after it was known war would be waged, Germany commenced on French soil her march to Paris.⁴ It was not until several months later that the detailed work which had made possible such speed and surety became known to the English. The *Graphic*, then, recounted the visit of General von Moltke to France in April of 1868,

¹ John Scott Russell, *Into Versailles and Out*, Macmillan's Magazine, Feb., 1871, pp. 310 et seq.

² A. I. Shand, *On the Trail of the War* (London, 1870), pp. 87-88.

³ *Notes and Queries*, Fourth Series, vol. vi, p. 176; *Spectator* and *Daily Telegraph*, issues of July 23, 1870.

⁴ *Spectator*, Aug. 6, 1870.

at which time he had visited her frontiers and had made notes on the condition of her defences.¹ John Scott Russell told the readers of *Macmillan's* that for several years he had noticed the organization of the railroads throughout Germany into one military system. Each train, he said, carried two numbers and marks,—one of which gave its capacity in peace time and the other the use to which it was to be put in the event of war, and how many soldiers or how much ammunition it was to carry. For four years previous to the war, he claimed, each man, and every weapon was exactly placed on paper for the march to France.²

The fact that the Emperor at first forbade the presence of correspondents with the armies served to prevent the British temporarily from discovering that their belief in French military preparedness was a delusion. However, the length of time elapsing between the Emperor's proclamation to his people on the twenty-second of July and the beginning of his campaign gave the more thoughtful matter for reflection. They wondered if the delay were not caused through some lack of generalship. It had been thought France was all eagerness to put to the test those two machines that Disraeli named as the cause of the war,—the so much discussed *chassepôt* and the *mitrailleuse*.³ Superiority of equipment would be necessary to counter-balance the presence of von Moltke on the Prussian side. That the Emperor accompanied his army was regarded as rather a detriment to France. It was believed he belonged to that second class of rulers described by Machiavelli, those who were able to accomplish great things—by their

¹ Issue of Oct. 22, 1870.

² J. S. Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 310 *et seq.*

³ Lord Carlingford to Lear, Bath, Oct. 19, 1870. *Later Letters of Edward Lear* (edited by Lady Strachey, London, 1911).

councillors. It was remembered how fearful British statesmen had been during the Crimea that he would seek glory in that campaign to the embarrassment of the allied generals.¹ "There he goes," said Sala, when at last the Imperial forces got under way, "There he goes, and he has forgotten to get himself a return ticket." His lack of it, perhaps, was due not so much to want of foresight as to inability to pay its price. Before he became Emperor he had advised France to borrow from Germany her system of military organization.² In 1867 he had formulated an elaborate report to aid the military commission. Only recently he had urged the abolition of exemptions, and the adoption of the Remington breech-loader that Metternich had told him was proving efficient in Austria.³ He was no more able as Emperor to accomplish these last innovations than he had been to accomplish the greater one when he was pretender. He was a sight to 'rouse the laughter of the gods, a Napoleon, feeble and old before his time, who had not the power to command his generals nor the ability to inspire his soldiers. In the vanguard of his army went the Turcos,—auxiliaries unfortunately accepted from the Arab chiefs. They were stationed in Baden, and whatever sympathy had been felt for France in that province rapidly disappeared. Of all the inconceivable follies committed by the Emperor, Sir Robert Morier thought this employment of African savages to fight the Germans was the greatest.⁴ But

¹ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 103.

² *Œuvres de Louis Napoleon Bonaparte* (edited by C. E. Temblaire, Paris, 1848), vol. iii, pp. 49 *et seq.*; chap. vi, pp. 268 *et seq.*

³ Wickham Hoffman, *Camp, Court, and Siege*, pp. 142-144.

⁴ Morier to his father, Aug. 3, 1870, *Memoirs of Sir Robert Morier*, vol. ii, p. 163. Cf. also *London Graphic*, Aug. 27, 1870; *Fraser's Magazine*, Oct., 1870. *A Month with the Belligerents*, N. S., vol. ii, pp. 483 *et seq.*

Morier was overfond of superlatives. There were yet other follies to match this.

On the second of August, Napoleon attacked Saarebrück, a town of six thousand inhabitants that the British journals were quick to inform their readers was unfortified.¹ Moreover, he had the misfortune to be successful,—which confirmed the existing opinion of French power,—and to misuse his success by a needless destruction of the remains of the little town. The message to the regent Empress that the young Prince Imperial, whom he had with him, had stood his baptism of fire very bravely, was another blunder. The British would not applaud the boy's pluck nor the temerity of a father that made such test of it. *Punch* and the *Spectator* made wry faces at the whole performance,—a baptism of blood, and tears, and fire, they called it.² There was a rumour in England, despite French protests to the contrary, that the fourteen-year-old boy, who was taken out in a special train that morning to direct the first mitrailleuse fired by the Army of the Rhine, was carried back hopelessly shattered and afflicted with an hysterical malady which made it impossible any longer to exhibit him in public.³ Paterfamilias read of this strange Caesar chrism with rising indignation, and with a sigh of relief, turned the page to read the simple address of the Prussian ruler to his soldiers. King William had told them at Saarebrück that he assumed command of his forces to repel attack. As for his people, he assured the French that they had desired, and still desired, to live at peace with them. As for himself,

¹ *Record*, Aug. 8, 1870.

² Aug. 13, 1870.

³ *Chamber's Journal*, March 18, 1871, *A Good Correspondent*, pp. 169 et seq. Cf. Edward Legge, *The Empress Eugénie and her Son* (London, 1916), pp. 59-60; Augustin Filon, *Le Prince Imperial* (London, 1913).

he warred against soldiers, not against citizens, whose security he would respect.¹ What a contrast the British thought him to the cruel Emperor with his painted cheeks and trained mustachios! What a contrast was the Landwehr to the barbarous Turcos!

On the morning of the fifth of August, six or eight hours before the event was known in Paris,² the London *Times* printed the news of the battle of Weissembourg, where some thousand Frenchmen with their complement of officers had surrendered. It was "really a great success," Charles Lever boasted in a letter to Blackwood, "I don't care a rush that the Prussians were in overwhelming numbers. May they always be so, and may those rascally French get so palpably, unmistakably licked that all their lying press will be unable to gloss over their disgrace." Not only were numbers unequal, but according to Sir Charles Dilke, who was at this time with the Crown Prince and as staunch an admirer of his forces as was the famous creator of O'Dowd, the battle was won really by some Poles who fought in the centre against the Turcos, while hardly a German or Frenchman was in sight. The Poles had cartridges and hymnbooks. The savages were almost as innocent of the one as the other.³

This defeat and the twin disasters of Wörth and Spicheren, which occurred on the same day, foreshadowed the fate of the Empire. The *Standard*, in its editorial of the eighth, spoke of them as proof of the genuineness of the love of peace and economy that had been professed by the Ollivier Cabinet on its coming into power,—a testimony

¹ *Times*, Aug. 4, 1870.

² Washburne to Fish, Aug. 8, 1870, Washburne, *Correspondence of the Franco-German War*, pp. 19-20.

³ Stephen Gwynn and Gertrude Tuckwell, *Life of Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Dilke* (N. Y., 1917), vol. i, p. 105.

that was at the same time a sort of swan song to Imperial prestige. It did not believe the battles presaged disaster to France itself. Nor did the *Morning Post* of that date, nor the *Guardian*, nor *Spectator*. But the *Times* was lugubrious, and the *News* croaked "Nevermore."¹

In Ireland, where demonstrations at Cork, Kantuck, and Castlebar² had followed the great night at Dublin, it was freely hinted that these British papers were in Prussian pay. Their evil tidings were disbelieved. There were cheers for General MacMahon, descendant of one of the "wild geese," who had contrived to elude the penal laws and emigrate to France. It was calculated that 600,000 Irish had died in the French service in the past century.³ They promised an Irish brigade to MacMahon now if he should ask it.⁴ In Limerick, 10,000 gathered at the Treaty Stone on the day of the battle of Wörth to vaunt their sympathy for France. Katharine Tynan, who was a little girl at the time, remembered how on her way from school she saw the Irish school boys fighting the battles over again, and seeing to it that the French had the victory, in spite of all the lying British press. No one would take the part of the Prussians, so the boys had to combat unoccupied houses,—of which there were no few in Ireland, and riddle their windows with stones, the while they shouted battle cries.⁵ Young Quixotes tilting at windmills, perhaps. Perhaps, torch bearers, cherishing the fire some day to melt their

¹ Issues of Aug. 8 and Aug. 9, respectively.

² *Northern Star and Ulster Observer*, *Spectator*, *Weekly Freeman's Journal*, issues of July 30, 1870.

³ *Spectator*, July 30. Estimate based on *Records of French War Office*.

⁴ *Weekly Freeman's Journal*, July 30, 1870.

⁵ Katharine Tynan, *Twenty-five Years' Reminiscences* (London, 1913), pp. 43-44.

chains. Their mothers and sisters were busy collecting old linen to make charpie for the French wounded.¹

"It is always safe to predict that if one section of Irishmen take to asseverating that anything is white, another section will therefore and forthwith take to asseverating furiously, that it is black," said the *Scotsman*. True to tradition, across the Boyne there was a fanfare of rejoicing. For Protestant Ireland favoured the Prussians, and already in Londonderry many had been wounded in a demonstration that for an Orangeman neutrality was as much an anomaly as it was for his Catholic fellow.² It was thought by the British that these Protestants did well to rejoice, for Dublin, and Cork, and Galway were cherishing the hope that France, that had often drawn the sword for others, might help her to attain nationality and the enjoyment of free institutions.³ It was a wild hope, the *Times* said, but it was discussed, none the less, by British papers. They reminded their readers that Monseigneur Dupanloup had encouraged Irish aspirations and accused Napoleon of having shown more sympathy for them than was correct for an ally of Great Britain.⁴ The *Evening Mail* inveighed against the Nationalist press for seditiously hoping England would be embroiled in the Continental quarrel to its undoing.⁵ This could not but increase the British efforts to isolate the belligerents. The little Island that embraced the world had the weakness of its strength. It roused the jealousy of others, who had similar anacondic desires. England had need of caution.

¹ C. E. Ryan, *With an Ambulance during the Franco-German War* (N. Y., 1896), p. 1.

² *Daily News*, Aug. 4, 15, 1870; *Saunders'*, Aug. 1, 1870.

³ *Times*, Aug. 13, 1870.

⁴ *Daily News*, July 25, 1870.

⁵ Issue of Aug. 9, 1870.

Lord Granville, in advocating the new treaty guaranteeing Belgium, had been actuated not only by a desire to secure the engagements to which England was a signatory, but by a desire to localize the war. Thus the Government, though renewing an entangling alliance, believed itself still acting in accordance with the tenets of the Manchester School,—as Gladstone urged on Bright, who was impatient of the sensitiveness for Belgium's safety. Indeed, this desire to localize the conflict seems to have been the guiding principle of Granville's policy. A free field for France and Prussia and a packed grandstand was his motto. France, he believed, would prove the stronger, and he wished to prevent any further increase of the odds that she might gain by assistance from the side lines. Not content with bolstering his own country into an attitude of rectilinear correctness by such means as proclaiming her neutrality on the very day of the declaration of war; adjusting her armament to that nice point which would ensure respect and yet not rouse suspicion; and by promptly passing an act to restrain the inordinate partisanship of the Irish, he set about the formation of a league of neutrals. In this he was assisted by the victories of the sixth of August. They prepared the public for the news that Strasbourg was besieged, Fort Lichtenburg captured, that the war, in short, was to be fought on French, not Prussian, soil. The French fleet had blockaded the northern ports of Germany, but the events of early August caused the prudent Danes to give support, now, to their Government's adoption of neutrality. They caused, too, the resignation of the Ollivier Ministry and the appointment of another, which an English paper said even flattery would be puzzled to salute with a tribute of admiration.

Where Austria before had been inclined to pledge alliance, the present rumour was that she would content her-

self with joining Italy in an agreement to urge a peace that would involve no territorial cession. A Berlin despatch, printed in the *Times*, claimed England had declined to become a third party to such a compact.¹ Press comment says nothing of the London visit of the Italian statesman, Marco Minghetti, nor do the biographers of the Ministers record it. But Count Beust asserts in his memoirs that it was this Italian,—an economist well pleasing, it may be supposed, to Bright and Gladstone,—whose mission resulted in England's decision to refrain from intervention and initiate the formation of a neutral league.² On the tenth of August, the day after General Montaubon, Count de Palikao, was appointed premier of France, Lord Granville wrote Lyons that he had informed the Prussian Ambassador of "engagements" exchanged between Italy, Austria and his own Government, by which they bound themselves not to depart from neutrality "without an interchange of ideas and an announcement to one another of any change of policy."³ Austria, be it noticed, before entering into this agreement had declared herself free from any conflicting engagements. Within the week, Granville informed the French Ambassador of the success of these negotiations and his hope to extend them,⁴—the outcome not of a formal compact of nation with nation, but a sort of "gentleman's agreement," formed by means of letters between Ministers. It was designed, he said, to take the place of a more formal project for combined neutrality that several Powers had advanced since the beginning of the war. Though the British proposals were received favourably, the note send-

¹ *Times*, Aug. 13, 1870.

² *Memoirs of Count Beust* (London, 1887), vol. ii, p. 206.

³ *British State Papers* for 1870, Foreign Series, vol. lxx, p. 96.

⁴ Granville to Lyons, Aug. 6, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxxi, pp. 11-16; Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 42-43.

ing was not completed until the middle of the succeeding month,¹ which makes it appear that there might yet have lingered some chance for France to gain allies, had she been able to retrieve the August disasters.

Rumours of the project created the impression in Germany, Morier reported early in September, that England had taken the initiative in organizing the Powers for a resistance to her exaction of territorial indemnity when the time of peace should come. He was reassured by Granville,² and Prussia made no remonstrance. But the French regarded this "*Ligue des Neutres*" as especially inimical to their interests,—an effort to rob them of intended allies.³ There were two reasons why France was justified in her complaints. In the first place, the fight was not to be one between evenly matched combatants. Lord Granville's estimate of the military strength of France was incorrect. Furthermore, it affected her more harshly than it did Prussia, since her chances for alliance were the better, not only in August when it was believed she might rally from defeat, and other nations with grievances against Prussia might have combined to strengthen her, but later when her weakness was discovered and the severity of Prussian demands wakened the wish of Neutrals to spare her from further humiliation, and themselves from future disaster. The League resulted, too, in giving Prussia assurance that no concerted pressure would be used against her should she exact an increase of territory. The strength of a neutral lies in the restraining influence exerted on the belligerents by the uncertainty of his future policy. The communication to France and Prussia of the perfecting of this *laissez*

¹ Denmark was one of the last to enter the agreement.

² Morier to Granville, Sept. 2, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 65-66.

³ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 43.

faire project ensured them in the indulgence of a do-as-you-please policy, the results of which would be dependent wholly on their own character. The League has a sinister appearance, also, in that it was concluded in secret, without debate of Parliament or the press. If it meant nothing, it was unnecessary. If it meant anything, it should not have been formed by Great Britain without the knowledge and consent of Parliament and people.

CHAPTER VII

THE DOWNFALL OF THE EMPIRE

SOON after his accession Napoleon had declared, "*L'Empire c'est la paix.*" In the middle of August, 1870, the French turned the *mot* against themselves and with a shrug and a gay attempt at raillery in the midst of disaster, exclaimed, "*Certainement ce n'est pas la guerre!*"¹ With no single French soldier left in Germany,—except as prisoner; with the enemy well across the boundaries; with the realization that General Le Boeuf was right when he had boasted not a button lacking from a gaiter for a single French soldier,—for the very good reason that not a gaiter was in the French equipment, nor a military map of France, nor many another necessary thing;² with their Government definitely apprised by the British success at league-making that they were to continue without allies,³ the French stubbornly refrained from crying a *peccavimus*. If the war had been furthered by Napoleon, or Gramont, or by Ollivier, or some black-garbed confessor of the Empress, it was conceded now that it had been adopted by the nation,—that it had attained legitimacy. Napoleon, submitting to the advice of his generals, the perturbed Regent, accepting an enforced change of ministry, were become only the sceptered puppets of their country.

¹ *Spectator*, Sept. 3, 1870, Letter of Paris correspondent.

² *Weekly Scotsman*, Aug. 20, 1870.

³ *Supra*, chap. vi, p. 125.

In July the Council of the Workingmen's Association had addressed a manifesto to the Workers of the World protesting against the war as a criminal absurdity and declaring themselves to be the spokesmen in this opinion of all the working people of France.¹ They claimed that those men who had performed the contortions of war in the streets of Paris were only the "band of the 10th of December" in a masquerade of workmen's blouses,—that proof of this was afforded by the fact that Pietri, the prefect of police, thought it prudent to stop the "patriots" because the real workmen of the Faubourg came forward in such force to refute them that cries of "*Vive la guerre!*" were drowned in cries of "*Vive la paix!*" The correspondent of the *Standard* had written, on the sixteenth of July, that he was convinced there was even in Paris a strong minority against the war; and the representative of the *Evening Mail* went so far as to deny that it was ever popular. On the very day that war was formally declared, the *Times* published the report that Thiers was receiving two hundred letters a day stating approval of his efforts to preserve the peace. It believed that those peasant proprietors who had supported the Emperor in the plebiscite three months before, had yielded their adherence because they thought Napoleon stood for peace.² Guizot, in retirement at Val Richer, had said to Bishop Wilberforce that France had such misgivings as to the right of the war that the Government would not dare exact an increase of territory.³ A merchant of Havre wrote to John Richard Green that there was not one of his trade in that city but hated the

¹ *General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the War*, a manifesto issued to the members of the International Working Men's Association in Europe and the United States.

² *Times*, Aug. 30, 1870.

³ Wilberforce, *Life of Bishop Wilberforce*, vol. ii, p. 360.

war as iniquitous; and another correspondent in northern France reported to Green that there it was equally condemned by the workmen.¹

But the conscripts had answered the call to the colors. In the barracks the long proscribed *Marseillaise* had been distributed by the Government;² it was sung in all the theatres of Paris by women draped in the tricolour. A favourite tenor of the Opéra Comique was forced to chant it from the top of an omnibus, halted in front of the Bourse.³ *Le Rhin* of Alfred de Musset and the *Chant du Départ* of Queen Hortense, shared in its honors. Through the cities the soldiers had gone marching, marching, in long lines of splendid rhythm to a battle-scarred frontier where waited an ancient foe. The tirades of Edmond About and of the hot-blooded Emile Girardin were read and quoted on the boulevard at the hour of absinthe, and next morning in the provinces.⁴ The ironic speeches of Thiers; the writings of Prevost Parodol that in days gone by had lashed the Emperor for having tolerated Sadowa; the tradition of the great Napoleon, cherished in every peasant's cottage throughout France, were bearing their bitter fruit. News came of the condemnation of the British press. The French Ambassador had asked that it be counteracted by some word of sympathy from the Queen's Ministers, but he had found Granville "cold, very cold."⁵ News came of defeats and German exultation,

¹ *Letters of J. R. Green* (edited by Leslie Stephens, N. Y., 1901), pp. 257-258.

² *Manchester Guardian*, July 21, 1870.

³ Mrs. George Cornwallis West, *The Reminiscences of Lady Randolph Churchill* (London, 1908), pp. 19-20.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 2, 1870; *Manchester Guardian*, Aug. 18, 1870.

⁵ Granville to Lyons, July 21, 1870, *British State Papers*, Foreign Series, vol. lxx; Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 39.

of the smug rejoicing of the British. "Tell those traveling Englishmen who so loudly express their pleasure at German victories that they make the position of their countrymen in France most difficult," wrote an expatriate at Boulogne.¹ France felt that she was alone, misunderstood, threatened with great danger. The bird of France is the *coque de la gloire*, says an old ballad, it sings in victory, but it sings yet more loudly in defeat. "The French rabble," wrote a visiting Englishman from the capital, "cannot endure that Albion should see them humiliated. They want to have it out on someone."² Somewhere something had gone wrong. It remained only to fight, and that with all the strength they had, to make the sun to smile again. The peasants whispered of Bismarck. They believed his power supernal, and when an early winter came with excess of cold and sleet, they said that, too, was the work of the Herr Chancellor. Mothers frightened their children with stories of the blond-haired Uhlans from across the Rhine, and told them of the glory of France in ancient wars.

The war loan of £30,000,000, asked by the Government, was supplied not by a few Parisian capitalists but by a vast number of creditors throughout the Empire, who showed by their eager investment a strong resolution to support the war to a favorable conclusion. M. Thiers was praised now as the man who had thrown round Paris a splendid girdle of barricades. After all, he had resisted war only because he knew his country was not ready. It was felt, vaguely, that fate had its hand in this,—that war had been inevitable.

Across the Channel a strangely assorted trinity specu-

¹ Letter to *Times*, Aug. 15, 1870.

² *Times*, July 29, Aug. 31, 1870. Cf. Gabriel Honotaux, *Contemporary France* (N. Y., 1903-1909), vol. i, p. 9.

lated on the chance of solving future difficulties by some better means than war. They were a leader of the labor party,¹ the editor of the *Banker's Magazine*, and a great lady,—the wife of Lord John Russell.² Their chirpings seemed irrelevant. The point to be discussed was the effect this war would have on England. Sir Robert Morier believed it would establish the preponderance of Germany over Europe for centuries to come. He did not wish France to be annihilated. It could furnish an element that Germany could not,—“lightness, grace, form,” but it should be induced by defeat into a more pacific temper.³ George Eliot recognized the war as one between two different civilizations. She, too, believed the world had entered on that better period, which would be “marked in future histories and charts as the ‘period of German ascendancy.’”⁴ The Earl of Lytton saw the Teutons as glorious, juvenescent; France, rotted by lies in every fibre till there remained to her nothing but native ferocity.⁵

The letter of Dr. Friedrich Strauss to M. Ernest Renan was much discussed in August as affording an authoritative intimation of what could be expected of the great nation new in its ascendancy. The writer was a German Liberal,—one of the Illuminati, who could fairly be heard on the subject. His country waged a war of ideas, he

¹ Edmund Beales, *Times*, Aug. 29, 1870.

² Letter to Lady Dunfermline, Aug. 24, 1870, *Lady John Russell, a Memoir* (edited by Desmond McCarthy, N. Y., 1911), pp. 229-230; *Banker's Magazine*, Sept., 1870, *Arbitration of the Sword*, vol. xxx, pp. 57 *et seq.*

³ Letters to Stockmar and Malet, Aug., 1870, *Memoirs of Sir Robert Morier*, pp. 165-177.

⁴ *Complete Works of George Eliot* (Edinburgh, 1878-1885), vol. xi (*Life and Letters*), p. 551.

⁵ Letter to Miss Farrar, *Personal and Literary Letters of Robert, First Earl of Lytton* (edited by Lady Betty Balfour, N. Y., 1906), vol. i, p. 258.

said,—ideas that were shared by University professors, statesmen, generals, privates, and the populace alike. Not through fault of hers was Germany driven to prove her right to unity by ordeal of battle. Once made a united nation she would speedily assert and establish a well ordered freedom. In the course of attaining her aspirations, she would have to discipline France out of her love of glory, but would leave her free, prosperous, and contented, a pledge for Europe's safety. This was a gilding with philosophy of Bismarck's simple statement that a victorious Germany would stabilize the equilibrium of Europe.¹

Strangely enough, it was this very solicitude for the safety of Europe that France advised as its most stimulating motive in the war. Its Government claimed specifically that it fought to preserve the balance of power. It was hoped that Gladstone would express some opinion of these rival claims instead of distributing in a thoroughly neutral manner equal condemnation to both sides. *Saunders'* remarked that in the midst of the Prime Minister's statesmanship, one called to mind the valiant conduct of such leaders as Canning and Palmerston.² The *Manchester Guardian* warned that the time was past for an English Minister to exhaust his vocabulary of epithets in praise of a condition of neutrality.³ "What a master of rigamarole he is," said Green, "nobody else could make one wish Palmerston alive again as Gladdie is making everybody wish him just now."⁴

That the wish was strong and prevalent was due not so much to the belief that any especial value would inhere in

¹ *Times*, Aug., *passim*; *Daily News*, Sept. 1, 1870; *Saunders'*, Sept. 3, 1870.

² Aug. 9, 1870.

³ Aug. 2, 1870.

⁴ Letter to E. A. Freeman, Aug., 1870, *Letters of John Richard Green*, p. 257.

his opinion of the relative merits of the two belligerents; not that it was thought he could infallibly determine to which nation the sensitive balance of power could best be trusted, but because the Belgian controversy had created distrust of German rectitude, and because the press and public men of Germany were showing contempt and hostility for England. Palmerston, it was felt, would have rescued his country from the negative rôle Gladstone had trained her to. If she blundered and blustered, or meddled and muddled, as Disraeli said she had under Palmerston, she could be no more abused than she was now. At home, John Stuart Mill blamed Gladstone for not having used the navy as a police force to prevent the aggression of either Power.¹ Bismarck scolded that England had not stopped the war at the outset by telling Napoleon that if he broke the peace he would find her ranged with Germany as ally.² He professed to find it mortifying that the British had so readily undertaken the representation of France in North Germany, and surprised Lord Lyons by forthwith entrusting German interests in Paris to the care of the American Minister. These complaints, which seem to have had their beginning at the apex of the German state, became widespread throughout the nation when the official papers published news that England was exporting horses, coal, and munitions of war to Havre. The press contrasted the outspoken judgment on the "greatest crime the country had witnessed" with the "aside" utterances that booked orders from France and calculated the amount of a ten percent profit.³ It affirmed that while England served Ger-

¹ Mill to Sir Chas. Dilke, Sept. 30, 1870, *Letters of John Stuart Mill*.

² *Bismarck the Man and the Statesman* (N. Y., 1899), vol. ii, p. 60; W. H. Russell, *My Diary during the Last Great War* (London, 1874), p. 494; Augustus Loftus to Granville, July 18, 1870, Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 37-38.

³ *Times*, Sept. 2; also in issue of Aug. 30, 1870.

many with a syllabub of praise, the solid pudding went to France. Complaints of this "merchantlike conduct" of her subjects were sent the Queen by her daughter, by the Crown Prince, and even the King of Prussia, until she became deeply distressed. After a letter from the Duke of Coburg which pointed out the dangers that would threaten England were she deprived of German friendship, the Queen asked Granville if it would not be possible to make some public demonstration to convince the German people of the endeavour to preserve neutrality.² The Crown Princess, grieved that accusations of gross unfairness were continually leveled against Granville, sent for Bismarck to say her say in his defence. He would not believe her, and said with a smile, "But his acts prove it." "It will be long," she wrote the Queen, "before people believe England means kindly and well by Germany."³

In the British press, small effort was made to defend an international practice admittedly bad, but which England had certainly not inaugurated. Prussia was reminded that she had shown herself quite as bourgeois in the Crimean War when she had sold arms to Russia. It was asked why now she addressed no complaints to America, who was exercising the same prerogative.⁴ Judged by the logic of common sense, British conduct was wrong but by the ethics of jurists and statesmen, as the *Economist* pointed out, it was well within the bounds of neutrality;⁵ and the author-

¹ *The Empress Frederick, a Memoir* (London, 1918), p. 232.

² Col. Ponsonby to Granville, Aug. 3, 1870, Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 38-39.

³ Crown Princess to Queen Victoria, Aug. 9, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 38.

⁴ *Annual Register* for 1870, vol. cxii, p. 108. The British Ambassador at Washington informed Granville later that America's export of arms was expressly secured by a treaty with Prussia.

⁵ Aug. 6, 13, 1870.

ity of the latter certainly had precedent in international law. Correspondents of the *Times* quoted Germany's own jurists, Bluntschli and Heffter, to show that it was not a nation's duty to prohibit the export of contraband.¹ The *Spectator* warned that a check of the export of coal to France would be a violation of treaty provisions. The most that could be done,—and some such course was advocated by the *News*, the *Echo*, and the *Economist*,²—would be for the Government to avail itself of the Customs Consolidation Act (an Act never resorted to except when England was on the point of becoming a belligerent) for the prohibition of export of munitions; or to extend the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment Act to "everything which sufficient authority shall decide to be contraband of war." It was pointed out by the *Pall Mall Gazette* that preventive action, truly to accord with neutrality, should have been taken before the war's inception, and not now, when circumstances would make such a course tell heavily in Prussia's favour.³ Lord Granville's circular in answer to Bernstorff was criticised because it stressed the difficulty of preventing contraband from reaching the ports of belligerents, rather than the immunity of municipal regulations from foreign interference, where no special treaty or generally accepted rule of conduct provided for the contrary.⁴

The tone of Count Bismarck, even more than his complaint, was considered extraordinary. "What does Count Bismarck think to gain," said the *Spectator*,

by calling Englishmen old women and taunting us with cowardice

¹ E. C. Clark, Cambridge, to *Times*, Nov. 4, 1870.

² Issues of Aug. 1, 6, 1, respectively.

³ Aug. 1, 1870.

⁴ *Globe and Traveller*, Aug. 24, 1870.

and prophesying our subjection? . . . Does he think Englishmen are Continentals to be driven into a duel by a few hard words? . . . or is he preparing a state of feeling in Germany which will enable him, when war is over, to set England at defiance? ¹

The *Pall Mall Gazette* expressed misgivings, too, as to what the pother was about. "If it had been a popular outcry in the first instance there would have been no great cause for surprise, but the impulse was given from above. It was the inspired papers that started the agitation; and it was not only started with singular promptitude, but with exceeding energy." ² Later in the month, with the controversy still unsettled, *Pall Mall* was alarmed by an article in the Hamburg *Börsenhalle* into believing that the object of Prussia was to convince its people that for the future England could be left out of the account,—that she would never act vigorously except when her business interests were concerned. ³

On the twenty-seventh of August, the announcement of the Count de Palikao to the French Chambers that the Imperial Government had purchased forty thousand rifles abroad, gave fresh impetus to Prussian protests, ⁴ and aroused a number of leading papers to denounce a policy so contradictory to Lord Granville's earlier statement that the bystander who furnishes fresh weapons to a disarmed combatant should not be considered as a neutral.

Already, in August of 1870, England was finding her position so prickly that the wish for war's early conclusion expressed in many of her journals cannot be thought to have been wholly unselfish. On the fall of the Ollivier Ministry, which followed within a few days the defeats of

¹ *Spectator*, Aug. 6, 1870.

² *Pall Mall*, Aug. 1, 1870.

³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 25, 1870.

⁴ *Daily News*, Aug. 30, 1870.

Wörth and Forbach, many editorials expressed the hope that this might be the prelude to the fall of the dynasty. An enforced abdication, it was urged, would be considered by Prussia such an acknowledgment of wrong-doing,—such a repudiation of the system represented by Gramont and Benedetti,—that any further desire to inflict punishment would be extinguished. The day of Ollivier's resignation, it was said in the *Telegraph* that

if the Imperial policy should be condemned and confounded before the incensed national feeling of Germany, she, also, France, be it remembered, is a great and united nation, and she will abide when dynasties have passed away and are done with. This calamity is the Sovereign's rather than hers, . . . we foresee for her a better fortune than the one of mere military fame and personal glories.¹

The *Times*, adding the weight of its influence to the popularity of the *Telegraph* to hasten the fall of the tottering dynasty, advised that the Emperor return to Paris and assist his country by an abdication. On August the tenth, with the smug assumption that its diagnosis of the disease of France was correct and its remedy the one that would be adopted, it proffered advice to England:

There is a duty incumbent upon us in such a contingency (a change of Government in France) from which, difficult as it would be in execution, no Ministry ought to shrink. Germany has never made war upon France. The Emperor threw down the challenge. . . . With the retirement of the challenger the battle ought to close.

The editorials of succeeding days were in the same key. France was told that she should not expect to escape the consequences of the acts of her rulers, and Germany that she might reasonably require some indemnity "for the

¹ Aug. 9, 1870.

expenses of a war she was challenged to fight." And the *Morning Advertiser* wailed that Napoleonism had broken down, and that the Emperor stayed with his army only because he was too ill to travel and too timorous to present himself to the people of Paris.¹

It is not surprising that the readiness with which the by no means, decisive defeats of the French were seized upon in a neutral country by the main organ of the Government and the most popular London daily, aroused the criticism of their contemporaries. "On the Continent," said the *Manchester Guardian*,

a declaration by the *Times* is regarded as hardly less important than if it were made by the Ministers of the Crown, and there is no saying what mischief may not already have been done by the reckless and scandalous suggestion that England now expects the downfall of the Napoleonic dynasty. . . . If malcontents in Paris were only waiting for some one bold enough to speak of "abdication," an English journal should not have pronounced the word.²

The *Conservative Standard* expressed regret that newspapers "professing to speak for the party which the Government represents—known to receive occasional inspiration from the Government, come forward to assure France that her safety lies in getting rid of her sovereign." England's assurance, it believed, that the only way to salvation led through revolution would be interpreted as a piece of outrageous impertinence. It congratulated Count Bernstorff on having won the Liberal press to such a "scandalous partisanship."³ The *Sun* begged that the French be left to their own counsels,—“to urge upon them any incentive to a revolutionary outbreak is, at a moment like

¹ Issue of Aug. 10, 1870.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

this, nothing less than criminal.”¹ The organ of the Church of England, the *Record*, remonstrated that there was

neither wisdom nor good feeling in seizing on the moment of the Emperor’s calamity . . . to call for his “abdication”. . . . He has ever been to England a loyal and steadfast ally . . . much more friendly, both in his avowals and his public acts, than either the old Bourbons or the Orleanists.²

“*Tout peut se rétablir*,” the Emperor had said after the defeat of Wörth. But the victory that he needed to re-establish the confidence of his soldiers and his people and to refute the croakings of the *Times* and *News*, was not to be won. The siege of Strasburg was begun on the tenth of August; on the next day the Germans captured Fort Lichtenburg. On the eighteenth, the French suffered another defeat at Gravelotte, and the following day Strasburg was under bombardment. On the twenty-ninth, Marshall MacMahon was defeated at Beaumont, and two days later Bazaine failed to make his way through the forces investing Metz. All this to a running accompaniment of verbal shell fire from the Liberal press of neutral England. The *Daily News*, in joining its sonorous voice to the *Io Victis*, assured France that she was without a ruler,—that in Paris men screamed out their conviction that no good could be done until the country rid itself of the Bonapartes. Napoleon’s mind, said the *News*, had lost its grip,—

He is like an enchanter deserted by his familiar . . . a pitiable sight striking vainly with his broken sword at his dreadful antagonist. All the Liberal feeling of England and Europe regards the Emperor as the real cause of the disasters of France, and believes that the very calamities which attend his fall may regenerate the nation.³

¹ Aug. 11, 1870.

² Aug. 10, 1870.

³ Issues of Aug. 17, 20, 1870.

Judy added her shrill piping to the chorus, and in thin verse exclaimed:

"If vict'ry crowns his aims, then shout Hurrah!
If conquered? then Napoleon *à bas*." ¹

Throughout the cheap news and tobacco shops of London there were distributed in enormous quantities caricatures showing his Imperial Majesty hobbling on crutches, with a hump on his back in the fashion of Mr. Punch, and little Louis carried pick-a-back.² When Napoleon's detractors ranged from the Lord Chief Justice, who rejoiced at the collapse of a "militaristic villain," to the cockney cabbies, who bought these prints, those who professed still to see health in his cause were hard put to it to defend him. Considering the importance of the *Times*, the *News*, and the *Telegraph*, and the comparatively small circulation of the aristocratic *Court Journal*, this paper showed some audacity in naming as "small spiteful little birds" those who had "pounced upon the wounded eagle," and had suggested his abdication as a means of escape from further humiliation. On behalf of the gentlemen of England it apologized for the language of a fraction of the English press and assured the world that it was "unindorsed by the best classes of society."³ The *Liverpool Albion*,⁴ from a lower rung in the social ladder, showed by its criticism of the larger dailies, that Napoleon could still count friends among other than the denizens of Mayfair. From beyond the English boundaries, the *Weekly Freeman* and the *Irish Nation* echoed their rebukes. The papers of Ireland thought the

¹ *Judy*, Aug. 17, 1870.

² *Daily News*, Aug. 18, 1870.

³ *Court Journal*, Aug. 20, 1870.

⁴ Quoted in *Evening Mail*, Dublin, Aug. 12, 1870.

⁵ The paper's policy won the commendation of the *Irish Nation*.

abuse of Napoleon had been so prolonged that, were it really not representative of English feeling, it should receive public repudiation.¹

It can hardly be supposed that discontent from a quarter so little influential could have done much to temper the tone of the British press. But some moderation was noted late in the month, and *Judy*, at least, believed the change was due to Ireland. In her edition of the thirty-first she says:

Circumstances have made our wise rulers aware that there is danger in these incitements to revolution, and the lesson sought to be taught to the French may be learnt nearer home — in Ireland. So the word has gone forth that the revolution game must now be abandoned and accordingly the Ministerial papers are now endeavoring to make their readers believe they have never done anything so naughty as to advise the subjects of a sovereign with whom we are on terms of amity to dethrone him.²

This change for which *Judy's* intuition found a reason, was remarked on, also, by the *Manchester Guardian* in its issue of the twenty-fifth, but without speculation as to its cause. Perhaps it was due not so much to fear of upheavals in Ireland as to the reception that was given to the *Times* and the *News* when they attempted to garb themselves in the white robes of peacemakers.

On the seventeenth of the month the greatest of London dailies advanced the claim of England to a peculiar fitness to the rôle of mediator, and urged the Government not to shirk from the difficulties and responsibilities of such a position. M. Benedetti was in England at this time. According to the *Times*, he left Calais two days before and visited Granville at Walmer Castle where Bernstorff went to meet

¹ *Weekly Freeman*, Aug. 27, 1870; *Nation*, Aug. 20, 1870.

² *Judy*, Aug. 31, 1870. The tendency to circle that was displayed in this and other instances by London's best known journal was called "curvature of the *Times*."

him. The *Manchester Guardian* reported that Prince Murat was a visitor at the Castle on the eighteenth.¹ The day that the *Times* chose for its advocacy of British mediation, the *Birmingham Daily Post* stated that already the Government's attempts had failed and the Queen's messengers had returned from Berlin. The Prussian King and his Minister had balked proceedings by declaring that if Napoleon wished for peace he must ask for an armistice in the usual way. The accuracy of the Birmingham paper seems somewhat doubtful since, surely, if such a decisive answer had been determined on, Bernstorff would not have been permitted to meet Benedetti, and had it been communicated to England, the *Times*, as Ministerial organ, would have been deterred from urging mediation. The *Standard* of the eighteenth denied that any foundation whatever existed for the story that the English Government had tendered its good offices. Whether the Birmingham paper had really achieved a "scoop" in chronicling the failure of negotiations that the Governmental papers were not allowed to notice, and the *Times* had been "inspired" to urge mediation in an effort to frighten a nation that showed itself recalcitrant, rumours were so rife that, on the old proverb of fire and smoke, it may be hazarded that the *Standard* was overly confident in its absolute denial. Biographers of the English Ministers could have done much to clear the mystery, but they are alike silent on the messages sent to Berlin and on what passed when the lights burned long in Granville's castle, overlooking the Straits of Dover.

The papers favorable to France were those most unfavorable to any attempt at mediation in the midst of defeats which they believed could be redeemed. The *Pall Mall Gazette* of the seventeenth thought it improbable that Napo-

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Aug. 20, 1870.

leon would, at this time, find it acceptable, and doubtful whether England, if she intervened, could do so only for such a period and for such a purpose as she might desire. From north of the Tweed, the *Scotsman* with his native caution, was wary of the violent efforts of the *Times* to share in the blessings of the peace maker. It remarked that its powerful contemporary had systematically fallen foul of France from the first,—had blamed her for vaingloriously forcing war on an unready enemy and now that France, herself, was seen to have been ill prepared, had told her she was beaten and should sue to Germany not to punish her longer. It believed the present judgment of the *Times* might prove as fallible as had been her estimate of the military situation the month before.¹ In its disparagement of the French chance for success the *Morning Post* believed the *Times* was jumping at conclusions which the German commanders would be glad to arrive at, and found it “unbecoming of gentlemen sitting at their desks in London to put forth statements so unpleasant and so unfounded with regard to the military position of our quondam ally.”² The *Dublin Evening Mail* may be considered as largely representative of Irish opinion when it expressed confidence that the *Times* would not be permitted to drag England into the quarrel by precipitating an impertinent and uncalled-for intervention.³

She was not. The mysterious interviews came to nothing. *Judy* might urge grandiloquently that England

“Step forth with stern but friendly mediation
And earn the gratitude of every nation!”

¹ *Weekly Scotsman*, Aug. 20, 1870.

² *Morning Post*, Aug. 18, 1870.

³ *Evening Mail*, Aug. 17, 1870. The opposite opinion was expressed in its issue of Aug. 12.

But the painful rhyme remained unproductive. There was no stepping forth,—only whispers so low and so discreet that at this far-off time one cannot give their import but only say that they existed.

Already there was shadowed the dark reason that was to make mediation a thing so difficult no nation would aspire to press it openly, and peace a thing so dear that France might be expected to fight unto exhaustion. On the fifteenth of August, the day Benedetti set sail for Dover, an Irish paper commented on the proclamation of the Prussian King abolishing conscription in Alsace as foreboding an intention to reannex that province. On succeeding days, British papers found matter for reflection in his appointment of Prussian governors for Alsace and Lorraine. It was remarked by the *Telegraph* on the twentieth, that in the King's reply to a papal offer of mediation he had expressed a willingness for peace at whatever time guarantees would be given him against future attack from France. Even those papers that had most consistently supported Prussia showed alarm. "A province cannot nowadays be transferred when its inhabitants protest against the transfer," said the *Times*,

and even if we could suppose the change formally made, it would undo all the benefits of peace. . . . The transfer of Alsace from France to Germany, were it possible, would violate the essential principle of respect for national sovereignty now universally acknowledged, and would be incompatible with the permanent maintenance of peace.¹

And the *News* expressed fear that if Alsace were granted Germany, that country, whose praise she had so lustily been singing, might grant a sop to French jealousy and pride at the expense of neutral territory.² If the principle of nation-

¹ *Times*, Aug. 18, 1870.

² *Daily News*, Aug. 18, 1870.

ality launched by Napoleon was proving a boomerang for his undoing, the Draft Treaty, also, was showing remarkable dexterity in curving back to the detriment of Prussia. Britain speculated on devices that would provide security without too deeply wounding France. The *Economist* records that a rumor was current at the beginning of the week to the effect that the Government favored the creation of Alsace and Lorraine into a neutral state,¹—a sort of apple of discord to be equidistantly poised between the two competitors. Only fear was at the basis of the rumor,—fear of the thing even “Jupiter” named briefly and hesitatingly as being too dreadful for discussion. Sir Robert Morier, in a letter of the twenty-first, wrote that this contingency which was alarming England was one that he had long foreseen. He proclaimed himself “heart and soul” with Germany, “but he was not blind to the danger of her taking over two provinces the inhabitants of which were more Gallic than the Gauls, because, being Germans, they could add a peculiarly Teutonic blatancy to their French character.”² John Richard Green, though rejoicing at Prussian success as the victories of truth, right, and intelligence, was as vehement as Morier against any snatching at provinces in the old style of Louis XIV. “The people of Alsace,” he said, are French to the core. “Men are not cattle—even if they have the ill-luck to be Frenchmen.”³ Another historian, W. E. H. Lecky, while dutifully chorus-ing pleasure at victories that would “raise the moral level of civilization,” expressed deep compassion for France, and especially for the peasants in the districts under invasion.

¹ *Economist*, Aug. 27, 1870.

² Morier to Stockmar, Darmstadt, Aug. 21, 1870, *Memoirs of Sir Robert Morier*, vol. ii, pp. 165-166.

³ Green to E. A. Freeman, Aug. 31, 1870, *Letters of J. R. Green*, pp. 259-261.

"I do not like Bismarck," he declared. "I think the bombardment of Strasburg was very bad, and that of Paris would be much worse. I am very anxious to see whether the Germans will prove moderate and magnanimous in peace."¹ From the editorial office of the *Fortnightly*, John Morley joined his voice in protesting against "anything like revindication of territory in Alsace or elsewhere in consolidated France," which, he believed, ought "to encounter the most energetic protests from the entire public opinion of Europe."²

So it was that the last of August found England watching Prussian movements with more of interest, but something less of sympathy than she had felt at the month's beginning. She could not so wholeheartedly applaud a war for the unification of Germany, were that war to result, also, in a partial disintegration of France. There were, too, *raisons de coeur* for a change of sentiment. Statesmen, who had served a gay apprenticeship as careless attachés in brilliant Paris; green grocers, who had stolen across the Channel for one blithe holiday; women, who cherished bits of gauze and lace, instinct with the beauty that is French, had pity for the *bel royaume* so grievously invaded. Undoubtedly, there existed in England strong sentiment against that territorial aggrandizement which Granville, during his league making, had assured Prussia his Government was not concerned with. England knew nothing of the strictures that had been laid on her by that "gentlemen's agreement." Her Parliament had been prorogued on the eleventh without its mention, and the press was uninformed.

The shift in opinion is the more creditable since it had

¹ Elizabeth Lecky, *Memoirs of W. H. Lecky* (N. Y., 1909), p. 86.

² *Fortnightly Review*, Sept. 1, 1870, *France and Germany*, vol. xiv, pp. 367-376.

nothing to do with the immediate value of the pound sterling. By the second week in August, the unsteadiness following the first great panic on war's declaration was well past. An unhealthy mania for speculation had diminished. Prices on the Stock Exchange were steady. The change implied that French success had been more dreaded than Prussian by the monied interests. Trade in coal and iron had received a direct impetus, and that in textiles was indirectly benefited because of the handicap imposed on rival manufacturers. Before the middle of the month the Bank of France suspended specie payment and the Bank of England was relieved of the strain of competition for the precious metals. Both France and Prussia contracted great war loans to British advantage.¹ Only the tailors and certain clerks in City offices, who were suffering from an influx of German competitors had reasons economic for wishing well to France.²

Temporary disturbances were, of course, to be looked for the week before Sedan. The stock markets were in a state of depression pending the result of the great battle, which it was believed would soon be fought. The stage was set for the last act of the "circus manager," and England watched in a tense hush of expectation. Even so, the disaster of September the second was so complete that the expectant were astounded. The news, published in the papers of the next morning, was that not only had the Emperor surrendered, but an entire army of almost a hundred thousand men had been made prisoners of war. The capitulation was not confirmed for some days, and in Ireland the newspaper offices were surrounded each night at dusk by crowds that waited for hours to read the hateful

¹ *Illustrated London News*, Aug. 20, 1870; *Spectator* and *Economist*, Aug. 13, 1870; *Annual Review*, 1870, vol. cxii, p. 79.

² *Daily News*, Aug. 31, 1870.

bulletins and tear them down, because their news continued stubbornly unpleasant. Windows were smashed and the matter was made the subject of an editorial by *Saunders*.¹

In London, wise and prudent Englishmen were either sympathetic or silent on the great victory; but in more than one instance, notably at the entrance to the Alhambra before the curtain went up for the evening's performance, a too freely declared admiration of the Prussians led to something like a *melée*. The *Queen*, always slow in her royal progress, had had no news, on the third, of the great battle, but presented her readers with full-page portraits of the King of Prussia and his defeated rival. The former wore his mustache curling up, like optimistic steers' horns; the latter wore his with pointed ends down-drooping as badge of mourning for the calamity of the day before. As England gazed on Napoleon's enigmatic face with its theatrical hirsute adornments, she saw that it was old and very weary. She believed the whirligig of time would never bring to him revenge. The papers were filled with pseudo mortuary notices that were read to the accompaniment of German bands that blared *Die Wacht am Rhein* triumphantly. They chronicled his life's events; praised him for a friendliness to England that she had sometimes disregarded; recalled his endeavours to extend French trade, to increase her industry, and develop her agriculture, his efforts to promote international goodwill. Soon the poets were busy with him,—first the penny-a-liners who wrote on order for the press, and later the greater ones, Browning and Buchanan, who wrote more ably and for longer time.² Surely when the poets weave sonnets of a man's life the fates cease to find its thread of interest.

¹ *Saunders*', Sept. 7, 1870.

² Robert Browning, *Prince Hohenstiel Schwangau, Saviour of Society*,

Scattered through the obituaries were some that were not complimentary. *Once a Week* described the Emperor as retiring to his sarcophagus, undismayed by the ruin he had brought on France, comforted by his eternal cigarette, his belief in fatalism, and the possession of a large fortune in English funds. It quoted the witty verse now popular with the Parisians:

"Les deux Napoléons les gloires sont égales,
Quoiqu' ayant pris les chemins inégaux;
L'un de l'Europe pris les capitales,
L'autre au pays á prix les capitaux." ¹

His personal wealth was denied by the *Times*, which did him the tardy justice to admit that, though for so long a period he had distributed the favors of the most splendid state in Europe, he had suffered little of her gold to cleave to his hands.² The ignominious end of this Caesar who as *Fun* had said, "'cried Havoc, and let slip the dogs of war'"³ was an excellent theme for the moralists,—something to rattle the bones of all the old quotations gathering dust in editorial closets. The *News* sermonized on vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side, and had a goodly following of imitators.⁴ But the utterances of Polonius soon pall. If it may be permitted to turn the clock of public opinion slightly forward, more interest will

Complete Poetical Works (N. Y., 1917), p. 907; Mrs. S. Orr, Robert Browning, *Life and Letters* (N. Y., 1891), pp. 425-426; W. Hall Griffin and H. C. Minchin, *Life of Robert Browning* (London, 1911), p. 244; Robert Buchanan, *Complete Poetical Works* (London, 1901), vol. i, *Political Mystics, Songs of the Terrible Year*, pp. 295-347, also a drama, *Napoleon Fallen*.

¹ *Once a Week*, Sept. 17, 1870.

² *Times*, Sept. 21, 1870; *Economist*, Oct. 22, 1870.

³ *Fun*, July 30, 1870.

⁴ *Daily News*, Sept. 3, 5, 1870.

be found in the details of Napoleon's last days as Emperor that reached England somewhat later.

Green was fortunate in having an account from the French historian, Gabriel Monod, who was serving with a French Protestant Ambulance at Roncourt, near Beaumont, when the French soldiers came pouring in, "weary, starved, mutinous." They had had no rations for two days, and plundered the fields for potatoes, and then flung themselves down to sleep as best they might. The Imperial Staff came clattering down the street, with Napoleon, old, way-worn, covered with dust, pasty-pale, his moustache gray-white. All night long thousands came straggling in. At early morning the Emperor's horse was called for, and Monod saw the suite appear all spick and span in the midst of the mob of soldiery. Napoleon was painted to the eyes, his hair and moustache dyed and waxed again. Only one or two peasants cried out a viva for him, and they were answered by the grim looks and the curses of the soldiers. Some shouted "*à bas l'assassin!*" On his way to his horse, he passed a group of officers and made a low salute, but none responded.¹

Another vignette came from Archibald Forbes, who wrote for the *Advertiser* and the *News*. He describes Napoleon in front of the weaver's hut, where he had his interview with Bismarck and arranged for his surrender. A half troop of the Slesvig regiment of Life Guards formed a semicircle around the house, while the lieutenant and two of his dismounted men marched up to the cottage wall behind the Emperor's chair to halt and draw their swords. The Emperor flushed and glanced backward, as though he did not half like these German tactics. His barber told Forbes,—and the fact was confirmed by reports of the

¹ Green to E. A. Freeman, *Letters of J. R. Green*, pp. 263 et seq.

enemy,—that Napoleon had conducted himself worthily at Sedan, had directed guns with his own hand, and kept continually under fire. But he had found his army honey-combed with socialism, and desirous of a republic. Many regiments would not follow their officers. It was Wimpffen, not MacMahon, who had to make the surrender, for the latter had been wounded in an attempt to rally some of the disaffected. In Paris, there had been such vivas for the war and for himself, that he had chosen to avoid the main thoroughfares on his journeyings from St. Cloud to the Tuileries, the day before he had set forth. He thought he moved in the popular direction, that he would lead an army well equipped, eager for glory.¹ Count Bismarck reported that Napoleon told him at the weaver's cottage that he never desired the war, that he was forced into it by his people. Again, and again, he repeated, "*On m'a trompé, on m'a trompé.*"²

It is hard not to give him some dole of sympathy. Mixed warp and woof, *Punch* called him,³ and it might seem from his early writings that fine ideas and good intentions might have won for him lasting honour, had not the old Napoleonic legend warped them hopelessly. "No one of the ex-royalties now scattered about the country is a less deserving subject of sympathy and regret," said Froude in *Fraser's*.⁴ But Froude's epitaphs have a way of getting themselves re-written by posterity. As the *Spectator* said, the Emperor had spent two-thirds of his life in dreaming of power and the remainder in exercising it to such poor purpose that he

¹ Archibald Forbes, *My Experience of the War between France and Germany*, vol. i, pp. 253-254.

² Blanchard Jerrold, *At Home in Paris*, vol. ii, p. 13.

³ *Punch*, Sept. 17, 1870.

⁴ *Fraser's Magazine*, Jan., 1870, *Personal History of Imperialism* in 1870.

had made all the mistakes he had inveighed against before his succession.¹ Had the gods loved him and taken him away while he was yet Louis Napoleon, he would have been looked back upon as the most promising of prince pretenders. Circumstances alter personalities, and the British were, perhaps, saner in their judgment when they condemned a system that made the fate of a nation depend on one man only, than when they croaked abuse of the "invalid adventurer," the "Emperor of the despot brood."² and the "crowned colossal thing that crawls."³

The best of epitaphs was spoken across the Channel by one of the officers of the army that was, in the appropriately inaccurate French of King William's note to Napoleon, "*si bravement battue sur vous ordres*."⁴ It was the single sentence of an old officer, who flinging his head far back to inhale the fine air of the morning, exclaimed gratefully, "One breathes better."⁵

¹ *Spectator*, Sept. 10, 1870.

² W. C. Bennett in *Literary World*, Sept. 16, 1870.

³ Roden Noel, *Sedan*, *St. Paul's Magazine*, vol. viii, p. 162.

⁴ *Graphic*, Sept. 24, 1870.

⁵ *Spectator*, Sept. 10, 1870.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RECEPTION OF THE REPUBLIC

AFTER the great victory of September, royal headquarters were established in the old cathedral city of Rheims, and for a week a pause was made while men asked themselves whether the war was at an end. When the German soldiery had learned the Emperor was caught in the mouse trap of Sedan, there had broken out among them the wildest exhibition of delight; for they believed his capture would end hostilities and make possible a return to their homes. It was remembered that the King had proclaimed that he did not war with the peace-loving people of France but their ruler, and their own anger had been stirred not against France but against the odious Minister of the Emperor, M. Benedetti, who had insulted their aged King. They believed that France, too, was eager for the war to end. There remained the matter of an indemnity to be arranged, a treaty to be signed with the Empress Regent, or whomever the French might appoint their representative, the attaching of red seals and ribbons, and a gay return to their homes.¹

The spotlight must be shifted from an army that marked time and waited to a capital where civilians were about to take into their hands the command the Emperor had let slip. The officer whom he had appointed Adjutant General of

¹ Archibald Forbes, *My Experience of the War between France and Germany*, vol. i, pp. 260-261; C. E. Ryan, *With an Ambulance during the Franco-Prussian War*, p. 362.

the Palace before setting out on his campaign, had been impatient for more active service. Napoleon comforted him with the intimation that he would, perhaps, find greater danger at his post in Paris than on the field of battle.¹ On the morning of the fourth of September this General must have given the Emperor credit for his prescience. Sir Charles Dilke stood that day with Labouchere in front of the Grand Hotel on the Boulevard and watched the fall of Empire. He describes it for his grandmother.

A battalion of fat National Guards from the centre of Paris, shop keepers all, marched firmly past, quietly grunting, "L'abdication! L'abdication!" They were soon followed by a battalion from the outskirts marching faster, and gaining on them to the cry of "Pas d'abdication! La déchéance! La déchéance!" . . . We stood just in front of the cavalry, that was partly composed of mounted Gendarmerie of the Seine . . . and kept watching their faces to see whether they were likely to fire or charge, but at last the men began, one by one, to sheathe their swords, and to cry, "Vive la République!" and the Captain in command at last cried "Vive la République!" too, and withdrew his men, letting the crowd swarm over the bridge.

The Revolution was accomplished. The Englishman joined those who went sweeping over the bridge and singing the *Marseillaise* in such a chorus as had never been heard before. "They halted in front of the Chambers, and after ten minutes parley inside, the leaders returned, and chalked upon one of its great columns the names of the representatives of Paris declared to constitute the Provisional Government The crowd demanded the addition of Rochefort's name, and it was added." After that he followed on to the statue of Strasburg that was decorated with flowers, in recognition of the gallant defence the city was still making, and then to the Tuileries. A Turco

¹ Capt. the Hon. D. Bingham, *Recollections of Paris*, p. 164.

detained them at the gates by dancing in front of the crowd, but finally they grew impatient and insisted on entering the private gardens, so the gates were thrown open, and the crowd swept in, and up into the palace, and through each grand apartment. Nothing was touched, for guards had been stationed everywhere, and the people respected the power of the new Republic. It was all most satisfactory. "I would not have missed yesterday for the world," Sir Charles wrote to his grandmother.¹

In London the news of this rose-water revolution was received with equanimity and in many quarters with positive rejoicing. It had been accomplished so pacifically that *Fun* seemed only bent on making a poor joke when she exclaimed, "*Le roi est mort. Vive le roi!*" It was recognized that the word, republic, had a sort of talismanic charm for Frenchmen,—that only under this old-new government could there be expected those prodigies of valour that must be performed if the Prussians were to be driven across the border. Whether or not the metaphysical metaphor of the *Observer* was correct, in describing a dynasty in France as cut flowers that could be kept fresh only for a brief time by tender care, or whether, as the Tories believed, the change was only a transient one, men accepted it as a means to a welcome end. Gambetta and Jules Favre, said the *Standard*, naming two of those whose names Sir Charles Dilke had seen chalked up for the crowd to see, had heretofore done all they could to embarrass the Government in its moment of supreme emergency, but they had acceded to power under a pledge to carry out the national will and could be expected to accomplish all that was pos-

¹ Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of the Right Hon. Sir Chas. Dilke*, vol. ii, pp. 109-110. Cf. Fleury, *Memoirs of Empress Eugénie*, vol. ii, pp. 427-428.

² *Observer*, Sept. 17, 1870.

sible to expel the enemy from French territory. It accepted, therefore, a Government that even the staunchest Imperialists supported as the best, "if only a provisional substitute" for the Empire. It was noted, too, by admirers of the exiled prince pretenders, that General Trochu, the President, was an Orleanist and, though patriotically embracing every means at hand to free France from her difficulties, might be expected, in time, to revert to his former principles.¹ The *Globe*, indeed, believed it impossible for a Republic to last in France, since the theory of equal distribution of citizenship and distinction was impracticable in a country where the individual appetite for honours was peculiarly keen.² In Ireland the *Nation*, disgruntled at the overthrow of Empire, denied that the *de facto* Government was representative of the wishes of the French people, though it could expect their support so long as it devoted itself to repelling invasion.³ The *Cosmopolitan*, taking the unique position of denying efficacy as well as longevity to the new Government, prophesied that Jules Favre would shortly have to yield to Prussia the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine and a hundred millions sterling for indemnity. "Then," it gloated, "his little mushroom Paris Republic will collapse like a bubble of fetid gas, and the red ring of Jacobites, by which M. Favre is surrounded will 'make themselves air' like Macbeth's fiends and vanish into enveloping night—into the contempt of history."⁴

But the *Times* held that Favre and his fellows had substantial claims for respect in view of their past services, and hoped their way might be made easy.⁵ The *Telegraph*

¹ *Standard*, Sept. 6, 1870.

² *Globe*, Sept. 9, 1870.

³ Issue of Sept. 19, 1870.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Times*, Sept. 5, 1870.

lauded them for "high mental gifts, rich culture, and spotless reputation,"—excepting only Rochefort as a representative of "rowdyism," and justifying even his election because of the suffering entailed by his high courage.¹

That the members of the Government were almost all representatives of Paris was considered not inappropriate since the defence of the capital was the great military problem they would be called to solve. The fact that they described themselves as a Government of National Defence, rather than as a Committee of Safety, was believed an indication that they would use their powers moderately and in the interest of all France. Jules Favre, Gambetta, and Rochefort were a guarantee for the great towns. The large military command which the Emperor had, perforce, kept in the south to ensure its loyalty could now be directed against the enemy.² Trochu, it was said, in four days had been able to assemble an army from the remotest corners of France and place them in Paris, drilled, armed, equipped, and ready for the fray.³ "King William has yet a good deal of fighting before him," observed the *Globe*.⁴ Sir Edmund Blount wrote that the Garde Nationale and the Garde Mobile were admirable—far superior in appearance to the regular troops that had gone to meet the Prussians—well behaved, quiet, without drunkenness, and possessed of that spirit of obedience the other army had utterly lacked.⁵

But those who gave the new Government the sincerest welcome were those who believed its value was inherent in itself and not simply contingent on its efficacy in expelling

¹ *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 6, 1870.

² *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 7, 1870; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 7, 1870.

³ *Vanity Fair*, Sept. 17, 1870.

⁴ *Globe and Traveller*, Sept. 5, 1870.

⁵ *Memoirs of Sir Edmund Blount*, diary entry of Sept. 13, 1870.

the invading Prussians. They were men to whom a republic, no matter by whom, or of whom constituted, was the symbol of a glorious freedom—men like Swinburne, who set himself the task of writing a lengthy ode in praise of its nativity—and that larger class to whom an abstraction was moonshine, but who suffered under the realities of an imperialistic “queendom” and looked across the waters for a beacon to guide them to a safer mooring. Louis Blanc had told them what great things the Republic of '48 had planned to accomplish. He was gone back to his own country now and many letters followed him to tell of the change of feeling taking place for France. To Charles Bradlaugh the new Republic was a young giant from whom could be expected not only the salvation of France but such social reforms as would benefit the world. With a florid fervor equalling Gambetta's he begged that the people of all nations stretch out the hand of fellowship to the “thrice-risen child of Freedom.”¹ Henceforth his journal, the *National Reformer*, that had used its lash against a dynastic war waged by the Empire, was pledged to aid the French Republic in defence of its territories.

Much interest was felt in the first steps of a new Government of which such diverse things were said. It was believed it might win for itself allies where the Empire had failed. A pronouncement was waited for on Italy. The men risen to present power were those who had consistently protested against the French occupation. Would they now repudiate the annexation of Nice and Savoy and promise to leave Rome in the unmolested possession of the Italians? M. Jules Favre and his colleagues did nothing to gain an alliance that the *Telegraph* thought was the only one they might secure.² It was suggested by wide-spread-

¹ *National Reformer*, Sept. 11, 1870.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 16, 1870.

ing England that the new Government might signify its change of character by abandoning Algiers, an extravagant piece of folly that France must see diverted from her assistance many soldiers that she sorely needed. But General Trochu and his colleagues recognized their powers as provisional and outside of an indiscreet flourish addressed to Spain about the fine things in store for the Latin race, were content to take account solely of the business in hand.¹ They were no innovators but the delegates of a hard-pressed nation.

On the sixth of September, M. Jules Favre, in his capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs, issued a circular which clearly defined the war, the great pivot on which the fortune and future career of France must turn. It attempted to throw the onus of its disastrous declaration on the defunct Empire, and for itself utterly disavowed any intention of conquest. At the same time it startled England and Germany by expressing a rigid determination not to cede an inch of territory nor yield a stone of fortress to hasten the making of peace. Its vehemence in this regard was disapproved by the *Globe*,² which wished the Provisional Government rather to take the lead toward preparing France for sacrifices than to nerve her to firm resistance. It was condemned also by the *Times* and *News*,³ that still antagonistic to French policies, derided this simultaneous proclamation of a desire for peace and a resolution not to budge a step to get it. They believed, as did also the *Post*,⁴ that France was so confident that the changed character of the war would bring intervention that she thought she could be careless as to whether or not her stubbornness might complicate the

¹ *Daily News*, Sept. 13, 1870.

² Issue of Sept. 8, 1870.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Morning Post, Guardian*, issues of Sept. 10, 1870.

efforts of the neutrals. In spite of the sympathy felt for her, such a *ne plus ultra*, the *Guardian* believed, would deter France from gaining any ally, save only that of a widespread, engulfing social disorder. It feared the Radical leaders were willing to invoke international revolution. Favre, himself, it acquitted of conscious complicity in such malicious endeavors, though it deprecated the possible effect of his circular.¹ He was believed to be, as Lord Lyons said, really patriotic, but too much the slave of sentiment to be a good diplomatist or a skilful negotiator. However, the *Guardian's* suggestion is interesting and worth looking into.

On September the fifth the Central Committee of the Socialist Democratic Party issued a manifesto protesting against the annexation of Alsace Lorraine. It declared that "in the interest of peace and liberty, in the interest of Western Civilization, the German workmen would not patiently tolerate the annexation of these two provinces, but would faithfully stand by their fellow workmen in all countries for the common international cause of the Proletariat."² As a demonstration of counter opinion, large meetings of the most influential men of Prussia had been held to urge the King to exact such guarantees as would give security for the future conduct of France and the unity of the entire German people.³ The Manifesto, taking note of these activities, said they were stage-managed to create the impression that the pious King was coerced by the irresistible behest of the German nation to abandon his pledge

¹ *Morning Post*, *Guardian*, issues of Sept. 10, 1870.

² Lyons to Granville, Sept. 12, 1870, Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 55.

³ *The General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the War* (London, 1870), p. 96; *London Graphic*, Sept. 10, 1870.

⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 1, 1870.

to war only on the soldiers of the Empire. Bismarck well knew there were social and political malcontents in Germany as there were in France. His policy was to silence them by repression rather than coddle them by concessions. In Frankfort the war had not been received with enthusiasm, for many of its inhabitants hated Prussia and believed victory would make her doubly autocratic. Business there was at a standstill. Many great houses had failed and there was no work for the artisans.¹ The army had shown an alarming willingness to cry quits at the downfall of the Empire. Early in September the *Volkes Zeitung* won friends by its plea for peace. A republic in France had precedent for liberating and synthesizing all the discontent within the boundaries of its neighbors. "What I most fear," it was reported Bismarck told a British attaché, "is the effect of a republic in France upon Germany itself. That is what the King and I most fear, for no one knows so well as we do what has been the influence of American republicanism in Germany."² Bismarck was prepared to fight an enemy in front and resolved to prevent the appearance of an enemy in the rear. The men who had signed the Manifesto, and even those who had printed it, were arrested very promptly and sent to Lützen in East Germany. Their detention roused no great protest in England. The *Reformer* had printed the appeal in letters half an inch thick, and this of itself had been enough to invest it with frightfulness in the mind of the average Britisher.³ Of the widely read journals only the

¹ Corvin, *Germany under War*; *Temple Bar*, vol. xxx, p. 277.

² *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 26, 1870. The interview with Mr. Malet was reported first by the *Daily News*. Later Bismarck denied that he had made the statements ascribed to him. Cf. *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 8, 1870.

³ Cf. *London Graphic*, Sept. 24, 1870.

Spectator dared to praise the German workmen for their advocacy of "honorable and reasonable political measures."¹ But when in continuation of the policy of repression, Dr. Jacoby was arrested at Königsberg for speaking against the territorial annexations, the British roused themselves. They protested against the imprisonment of an elderly "philosopher-democrat," who, it was felt, was the very honorable representative of opinions that, though they lost caste when espoused by certain of the German workmen, were, none the less, shared by the majority of Europe. Said the *Telegraph*, "The admission that he (Bismarck) fears the spirit which he has gagged in the person of Dr. Jacoby justifies the warning that in trampling on the honor of France and violating the right of the conquered provinces to be consulted, he may be setting a brand upon his own success and making democracy strong by identifying it with morality, restitution, and lasting peace."² The *Manchester Guardian* condemned not only the deed but the method of its execution which it called the exercise of an instrument substantially equivalent to the *lettres de cachet* of the agents of divine right.³ The *Court Journal* reported the rumour that many more were marked men on the Chancellor's list. For the British to advise Count Otho von Bismarck Schoenhausen at this time in the interest of free speech would have been, as was recognized, something like advising a Nasmyth steam-hammer while it was falling. But when other refractory papers showed themselves uninfluenced by the punishment meted out to the *Frankfort Journal* for its protest in favor of the sturdy old Radical, and especially when the *Cologne Gazette*, influential in its own Rhineland provinces and in Prussia and

¹ *Spectator*, Sept. 17, 1870.

² *Telegraph*, Sept. 24, 1870.

³ *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 26, 1870.

South Germany as well, offered opposition, the Chancellor realized that attempts to muzzle the press were impracticable. His failure caused him to lose something of his excellent *sang froid*, and to express strong opinions on this lack of support.¹ After a month of punishment he released Professor Jacoby and all others accused of like offense, with the exception of some Socialists. The British hoped their criticism had influenced him in this, but the *Globe* and the *Spectator* believed it was due rather to the dissatisfaction expressed by the Liberals, especially in South Germany.² Orders were given that no more political arrests be made and that political meetings be permitted. Bismarck had no sympathy with the German admirers of the Government of the "gentlemen of the pavement," but he believed he could afford generosity since the object of their praise would be short-lived. In Metz there was a great army under the staunch Imperialist, Bazaine, who had made no intimation that he had accepted a change of masters. The Republic had gained no allies. It had not even received recognition from the great monarchical nations of Europe. Even in France its legality was dubious for it had had no popular confirmation. The plebiscite, so signally demonstrating the confidence of France in its Emperor, remained the last recorded expression of public opinion. Furthermore, previous republican governments had been of short duration, and had occasioned such disturbance in Europe that they had left a legacy of dread. This one's defiance, certainly, had done nothing to ingratiate it with its enemy, and Bismarck knew it had small chance of making good its boast. When the time should come for a humiliating peace to be signed, could it be expected that France, France of the provinces, would tamely accept this

¹ *Court Journal*, Oct. 8, 1870; *Daily News*, Oct. 14, 1870.

² Issues of Oct. 27 and Oct. 29, 1870, respectively.

Paris-born Republic and give to it, and to its treaty, the ratification of a silent consent? However helpful the Government might be to Prussia, temporarily, by its repellant influence on the neutrals, and by the potentialities it might have of dividing France against itself, it was expedient that when the time for peace should come, there should be men at the helm of a different character from Favre and Rochefort. Prussia once before, conjointly with the other Powers, had reimposed a dynasty on France to give security to a hard treaty. Bismarck now held as his prisoner an Emperor, who cherished great ambitions for his son. Perhaps this new eaglet could be taught to fly as Prussia listed and be tethered so strictly by strong obligations that his flight would be always within the zone of Prussian influence. The father, then, was treated with Imperial honors. On his surrender, Count Bismarck's phrase, "Sire, I receive you as I would my own Royal Master," was quoted, and not with favour, among the Prussian soldiery. He was assigned the magnificent castle of Wilhelmshöhe as residence, and Queen Augusta was deprived of one of her finest chefs that his kitchen might be under proper governance. A member of the North German Parliament drew attention to the gilded captivity of the third Napoleon and complained that it foreboded his reinstatement as sovereign of France. He was prosecuted and sentenced to a two months' imprisonment.¹ The Empress and the Prince Imperial were fugitives in England. There began to be circulated, soon after their arrival, a penny sheet called "*La Situation*" that strongly urged a restoration.² It could not

¹ The article was written by Dr. Hirsch, the editor of *Gewerkverein*, in which journal it appeared, *Daily News*, Nov. 7, 1870. Cf. Sept. letters of Berlin correspondent of *Daily Telegraph*; *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 14, 1870; *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, Sept. 14, 1870; *Graphic*, Sept. 17, 1870.

² *Literary World*, Sept. 30, 1870.

be established that it drew its inspiration from Eugénie's quiet residence at Chislehurst. She did not make it the organ of her communications to the British, and at least on one occasion, its statements so displeased her that she made use of space in the *Times* to refute them. The Duke of Cambridge, who called on her, found her low and subdued—looking sixty years old. He believed it would be the Orleanists who would have the next turn on the throne of France.¹ The British were lavish in her praise. They recalled her courtesy to English visitors to her capital, the profusion of her charities, her bravery in visiting the sick and dying during the days of the cholera. But they regarded her, none the less, as the butterfly ruler of a holiday France, now broken on the wheel of fortune,²—not as the regent of a dynasty that had not yet signed away its claims, an Empress regent, who might plot dangerously for the elevation of her son. Huxley praised her for her nobility and dignity. But she was no Roland, no Corday, he said,—“only a second-rate Marie Antoinette.”³ British journals might still describe the lightest bow and frailest ruffle of her costumes with ponderous minutiae, but it was only the Queen of Fashion that they meant to honor. Let King William shout “*Vive l'Empereur!*” as much as he pleased, no one but Bismarck would echo the cry, said the British papers. No Englishman would test his accent with the phrase.

That class in England most hostile to a restoration and the territorial cession which it was felt would surely accompany it, was the same that opposed Count Bismarck's

¹ Lord Carlingford to Lear, Oct. 19, 1870, *Later Letters of Edward Lear*, p. 126.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 12, Oct. 29, 1870; London Society, Nov., 1870.

³ *Life and Letters of Thos. H. Huxley* (edited by J. W. Harding, N. Y., 1896), vol. i, p. 361.

plans in Germany. The *Spectator* called it with courteous deference, "the operative class."¹ The first meeting of republican working men, called together after the establishment of the Provisional Government, was held in Arundel Hall, in the Strand, on the seventh of September. Its purpose was nonpartisan: the organization of a movement in favor of "reestablishing peace in the present crisis, and of procuring arbitration in place of war generally." But, in spite of remonstrances from the presiding officer, George Odger and others made it the occasion for declaring their sympathies with France.² Two nights later, after the circular of Jules Favre had been read and considered, a meeting at St. James's Hall, held under the same presidency, was permitted to pass resolutions expressing a welcome to the French Republic and the hope that, since the cause of hostilities had been removed, the German army would discontinue its march on Paris, and England would exert herself to smooth the way for peace.³

The resolutions and the speeches urging them were criticized by the press as indiscreet and unnecessary. The *News* contended that wars are made between nations, not between their governments,—on which false assumption the resolutions had seemed to base themselves. On the other hand, it pointed out that there was not in France any power with which a foreign Government could safely negotiate a treaty.⁴ A strange doctrine, truly, for if the power of a nation extends to the making of war, when the desire of war ceases, should it not be able to make peace, even though in giving expression to its desire it find it necessary to overturn the existing Government? It would seem to be a way

¹ *Spectator*, Sept. 10, 1870.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 8, 1870.

³ *Times*, Sept. 10, 1870.

⁴ *Daily News*, Sept. 12, 1870.

of saying, "You may do what you want if you want to make war, and you will be held accountable for it; but if you want to make peace you must do what your Government wants, and you must bear the burden of its decision." The *Morning Post* expressed regret that the democracy of London seemed incapable of understanding the events that were passing before their eyes.¹ Surely, the writers of the leaders in London's greatest dailies did little to help them.

On the day following the meeting in St. James's Hall the London Democracy held a demonstration in Hyde Park at which it was resolved that the address of Mr. Odger be sent to Jules Favre, and the British Government was urged to recognize the French Republic and to insist on an armistice for the arranging of peace by impartial arbitration.² Sixty thousand addresses condemning the continuance of war had been sent throughout the country to the centres of the working classes, and when Odger sailed from Dover, personally to deliver his resolutions to Favre,³ similar resolutions were already on the way from Birmingham and other districts where the "operatives" abounded. The succeeding meetings of September are too numerous to chronicle, but characteristic of all of them was sympathy for France; the wish that England intervene, either through mediation or a defensive alliance; and a grandiose desire to put an end to war for all time by some system of international arbitration. The vehemence with which the resolutions were proposed, and the willingness that was shown in many instances to plunge England into present war to ensure a stable peace suggest, somewhat, the amazing antics of a child that is overjoyed with a new toy but

¹ *Morning Post*, Sept. 12, 1870.

² *Times*, Sept. 12, 1870; *Spectator*, Sept. 12, 1870; *Illustrated London News*, Sept. 17, 1870.

³ *Times*, Sept. 22, 1870; *Punch*, Sept. 24, 1870.

plays with it after the old manner—sticks its rattle in its mouth, so to speak. May it be observed that these meetings, even though they numbered among the audience not only workingmen, but Liberals and Comtists of the white-shirted upper class as well, were regarded as of about as much consequence as the above mentioned performance? There was, albeit, less of tolerance in England's attitude. The *Manchester Guardian* said of the Democrats that they were utterly without influence except in the negative sense,—that the majority of the nation generally began to feel afraid it had been misled if, by chance, it found its opinion in any political question agreeing with that of the Democrats.¹ And when the Irish Nationalists, who shared their unpopularity, began to hold simultaneous demonstrations with them in Hyde Park, sympathy for France in some quarters, at least, received a considerable check. There crept in a fear that these meetings, where the *Marseillaise* was sung, and republicanism extolled, where international amity was discussed by men of many races, were un-English,—that Jules Favre, in receiving the resolutions and welcoming George Odger was trafficking with hostile forces. A great bond of friendship between nations, as between men, is a mutual enemy. And so, Bismarck, opposing a bulwark of blood and iron to strange new forces, which the Republic seemed to foster, appeared hallowed in a benevolent nimbus. It is hope-inspiring that the derisive press reports of the working men's meetings and the diverse theories bodied into resolutions did not blind many eminent men to the value and sincerity of their expressions of sympathy for France. If Mr. Bradlaugh offended by his abuse of the "God protected William of Prussia" there were Professor Beesly and Sir Henry Hoare to give the

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 20, 1870.

meetings dignity. Best of all there was honest John Morley to use the *Fortnightly* for their defense. In September he was writing:

The attitude of the workingmen toward the fallen country in the bitter hour of expiation attests a large and compassionate humanity that contrasts instructively with the crawling prudence of that organ of the English press, which after having played pander to the Empire of stock jobbers for eighteen years, at the first moment of reverse swiftly turns about, asks who is going to call for abdication, and then by a crowning stroke eagerly anticipates demands which the German Government had not made, waits for no ultimatum, prays for no moderation in the conqueror, and in the overflowing of its officious baseness urges France to come to terms with her adversary as speedily as she can, "even though these terms include the loss of Alsace, Metz and a strip of Lorraine." Once more the generosity and spirit of a nation, not inferior to any other in either, are hidden behind the ignoble words and grovelling ideas of a little clique of journalistic shadows.¹

It was the leaven of men of known worth and ability that won some consideration for the many who coupled sage desires capable of present fulfillment with fantastic hopes doomed to long disappointment. For one thing, the workmen wanted official recognition of the French Republic. The densely crowded meeting held on the twenty-fourth in St. James's Great Hall had petitioned the Government for this.² It was demanded next day by a more radical meeting in Hyde Park.³ On September the twenty-seventh the representatives of the Trade Societies of London waited on the Premier to address him on the matter. The *Manchester Guardian* thought the attitude illogical because the French, themselves, by deferring the conclusion of a settlement with Prussia until their position had been ratified,

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xiv, pp. 479-488.

² *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 27, 1870.

³ *Times*, Sept. 27, 1870.

acknowledged the Republic's provisional character. The de-facto Government already, was given practical recognition. Until such time as it should become formal, anything further would be inappropriate.¹ John Richard Green was very doubtful if that day would come. If the Republic showed itself favorable to the alienation of French territory, it could not stand a day, if it did not, it made way, in his opinion, for the "most frightful jacquerie the world has ever seen." John Stuart Mill believed a Government which had the obedience of all the country not occupied by foreign troops should be accorded an official recognition "as de facto."² The *Daily News*, which early in the month had struck out boldly for a recognition that would make amends for England's condonation of a former *coup d'état*, now showed repentance for its rashness.³ It was not to be expected that the *Times*, regarding with equanimity, as it did, the possibility of a Prussian entrance into Paris as preferable to an excess of republicanism, should join in the petitions for recognition addressed to the Prime Minister.⁴ It was a matter for wonder that Gladstone received the delegates of the Trades Societies at all. He was believed to have shown himself both gracious and sagacious when, after hearing them, he explained that England could not recognize a Government not yet officially sanctioned in France, but would lose no time in following that country's example when she did accept it. He went further. He intimated the representations the deputation

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 27, 1870.

² Green to E. A. Freeman, Sept. 5, 1870, *Letters of John Richard Green*, pp. 261-262.

³ Mill and Helen Taylor to Sir Chas. Dilke, Sept. 30, 1870, *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, vol. ii, p. 273.

⁴ Cf. editorials in *News* for Sept. 6 and Sept. 12, 1870, on this subject.

⁵ *Times*, Sept. 27, 1870.

made in regard to the cession of 'Alsace and Lorraine were not antithetic to his own feelings in the matter.¹ The workmen were but little better satisfied with the conduct of the Government after Gladstone's explanation. Their protests and demonstrations continued. They could not know what had been done already in the interest of peace. Ourselves live later to the advantage of our knowledge. For fifty years make even the walls of Chancelleries grow thin. We shall listen as best we may, and perhaps we shall find that the Government had done something more to overcome the difficulties of peacemaking than the orators of Trafalgar Square believed. And if France had to content herself with the mild endeavours we are about to study instead of the one ally of social revolution that the creation of the Republic made possible to her, it is fair to assume that her own conduct together with Bismarck's belated wisdom in releasing political prisoners and restoring comparative freedom to the press, and the British practice of permitting freedom of speech to all and sundry, prevented a precipitation of that *bouleversement* whose end none can foresee.

¹ *Morning Post*, *Daily News*, and *Manchester Examiner* of Sept. 28, 1870, endorse Gladstone's attitude; *Globe* of same date describes it as ambiguous. *Illustrated London News* is most captious toward the personnel and purpose of committee.

CHAPTER IX

ABORTIVE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

HOME AND FOREIGN NEWS

- Thursday —Mr. Gladstone bought a pair of slippers.
Friday —Immense slaughter of French and Germans before Sedan.
Saturday —Mr. Cardwell went out shooting.
Sunday —The Emperor of France abdicated and surrendered to the King of Prussia.
Monday —The President of the Board of Trade passed a good night.
Tuesday —The Empress having quitted Paris, a Republic was inaugurated.
Wednesday—The Home Secretary had a tea-party, and the Prussians are still marching on Paris.¹

Judy's chronicle for the week epitomizes the September attitude toward a Manchester Ministry off on a holiday while the Continent flamed with war. A correspondent of the *Times* thought the matter was more reprehensible if it were true, as reported, that the Cabinet had made an arrangement with other Powers not to join in the struggle without mutual explanation.² Was it to be expected, asked *Pall Mall*, that for the convenience of the upper classes, the whole world of nations would be good enough to fall into a state of suspended animation until the Upper Ten Thousand had spent their holidays and were disposed to return to work?³ The members of the Government were vari-

¹ *Judy*, Sept. 21, 1870.

² "Spectator" to *Times*, Sept. 7, 1870.

³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 7, 1870.

ously described as striding after grouse over the breezy Scottish moors and picking up shells upon the beach at Walmer. The Queen herself was not immune from criticism. She was at the furthest extremity of her kingdom so that every despatch coming to London had to travel an additional three days before it could gain her consideration. The *Economist* was for permitting the Premier to sign documents in the Sovereign's name whenever the flag was not flying over the royal residences at Windsor or London.¹

But it was the activities of the Prime Minister that were held up for special derision. "Napoleon III," said the *Globe*,

declares war against Prussia, and as a counter demonstration Mr. Gladstone commends to the amusement of the British Senate the astonishing capabilities of his favorite ballot toy. The cannon began to boom—the box began to rattle. Since then a dynasty has been wrecked; the keel of a Republic laid; a huge fast-rolling wave is threatening to suck into its vortex the ruins of an invaded capital. But the sublime equilibrium of the Premier's nature is not even now disturbed. . . . He brings his equable frame of mind to the undivided study of the Workingmen's International Exhibition, and discriminatingly analyzes its curious subtleties, its dainty refinements, its airy monuments of artistic triumph, its delicate guarantees of a continuance of industry — promoting peace, which of course we shall always enjoy."²

The English in Paris were extremely excited by the inactivity of their Government. "What is Lord Granville doing?" wrote Sir Edmund Blount to a friend at home. "Does he think that the majority of the English nation will ever pardon a Government which shows culpable apathy at such a time?"³ The *Globe* believed his lordship was setting

¹ *Economist*, Aug. 27, 1870.

² *Globe*, Sept. 9, 1870.

³ *Memoirs of Sir Edmund Blount*, p. 173.

an example in his own person of the rôle of neutrality and nullity he wished his country to adopt.¹ The shades of Palmerston and Canning were invoked to point the way to action.² The more taciturn and preoccupied the Minister appeared, the greater were the efforts to rouse him with warnings. It was urged that the downfall of the Empire was the psychological moment for the tendering of good offices. The sins of Napoleon should not be visited on the young Republic, the struggle should not be allowed to become a people's war. In all contention, said the *News*, there comes a time when events unmistakably indicate the road to peace. At such a time a Neutral may interpose with such deliberate but decided use of her moral authority as may prepare the way for peace. It hoped Lord Granville might now find his opportunity.³ But the Government was admitted to be at a striking disadvantage because it could not give force to a remonstrance by that reserve of strength which in times past had heartened British courage. It would take more than the generous subsidy that Parliament could be relied upon to grant to render efficient those defences, which the *Globe* thought had been criminally neglected in the interests of a false economy.⁴ The great claims intimated before Sedan in the *pourparlers* carried on with the Bishop of Strasburg and now widely bruited in the Prussian press gave little hope that any mere note carrying would prove beneficent.⁵ Morier believed from information gained in Germany, that, if the Neutrals opposed the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, Prussia was prepared to

¹ Sept. 7, 1870.

² *Examiner and London Review*, Sept. 3, 1870.

³ *Daily News*, Sept. 10, 1870; *Standard*, Sept. 5 and 12, 1870; Oxford Graduate, *Inside Paris during the Siege* (London, 1871), pp. 75-76.

⁴ *Globe*, Sept. 7, 1870; *Punch*, Sept. 10, 1870.

⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 27, 1870.

disregard the neutrality of Belgium and offer part of it to France to win her to complaisance.¹ But it is nowhere intimated that such a possibility proved a bogey to Lord Granville. It was rather the absolute divergence of the views of the belligerents than the fear of a further unscrupulous agreement that retarded his efforts at peace-making.²

On September the tenth, the day after France was forced to surrender Laon, Tissot, who had succeeded Lavalette as the French representative in London, informed Granville that several Powers (probably Austria, Italy and Spain) sympathized with the French desire for an honorable peace and asked that the English join with them to arrange for the signature of an armistice. He reiterated the determination, already expressed in the Favre circular, to maintain the integrity of France even if such a resolution led to a war *à outrance*.³ Notice of the endeavours of these Neutrals was already on the way to Bismarck in a letter from his good friend and former school-fellow, John Lothrop Motley, then Ambassador to England from the United States. The letter was a very amiable and quite *ex officio* communication which informed Count Bismarck that from frequent, confidential, and earnest conversations with those most interested and influential in British affairs, the writer was aware that great pressure was being put upon the Government by the other considerable Powers in favor of some kind of intervention, mediation, or joint expression of opinion as to the terms of peace. Hitherto, England had resisted these invitations and suggestions, but in doing so she had laid herself open to the charge of being an obstruc-

¹ *Memoirs of Hon. Sir Robert Morier*, vol. ii, pp. 179-180.

² Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, p. 357; Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 48; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 12, 1870; *Times*, Sept. 12, 1870.

³ *British State Papers*, Foreign Office, vol. lxxi, p. 58.

tive and a laggard. In view of these matters, he believed it his duty, as a sincere friend of Prussia, to suggest that the "more moderate the terms on the part of the conqueror at this supreme moment, the greater would be the confidence inspired for the future, and the more sincere the foundation of a durable peace." The Prussian Chancellor annotated this "sacredly confidential communication" with the words, "damn confidence," and filed it away.¹ Neither he nor his Sovereign was perturbed at the suggestion that England was to be budged from her neutrality by Powers that were too timid themselves to take the lead. King William, at the time of the confiscation of the property of the Queen's cousin of Hanover, had said that England had forgotten the days of Pitt and become the very humble servant of the economists of Manchester, of Gladstone, and of Cobden and his disciples.² There was no reason to believe that she was minded to change her policies. Prussia, too, was resolved to continue on in her course, and rejoiced that the anomalous position of the French Government made it appear less devious.

Von Bernstorff was instructed to inform Lord Granville that, though Prussia held herself in readiness to meet every overture of the Queen, she could not regard the proposals of the existing Government in France with such consideration as she would give to one that had been accepted by the French people.³ The captive Emperor was still to Foreign Powers the bearer of the sovereignty. Prussia asked what guarantee would be given for the re-

¹ Motley to Bismarck, Sept. 9, 1870, *John Lothrop Motley and his Family* (edited by his daughter and H. St. John Mildmay, London, 1910), pp. 288 *et seq.*

² King of Prussia in conversation with Comte de Boeswerk, A. Dumas, *La Terreur Prussienne* (Paris, 1872), p. 54.

³ Telegram of Bismarck to Bernstorff, Sept. 12, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, p. 83.

cognition of possible peace terms by the present Government of France, or any that might follow it. Diplomatically speaking, this statement was masterly. It offered in a most courteous way an assurance to the Provisional Government that it would be accorded recognition at a proper price. It apprized England that she would be violating the bounds of propriety if she too closely pressed on Prussia the solicitations of a Government from which she herself withheld formal recognition. If England unduly urged Bismarck to negotiate with a *de facto* Government,—the durability of which he avowedly doubted, would she not, in a way, be undertaking to underwrite for Prussia's security the forthcoming treaty? The dual character of a sovereign, a vexatious matter that had appeared in the dispute over the Hohenzollern candidature, now reappeared in the problem of the status of the captive Napoleon. He had surrendered, not abdicated. Moreover, the surrender was one of his person and involved neither his imperial power, which he had delegated to the Empress, nor his military command, which he had resigned to MacMahon. But the restoration of the Imperial family under German protection would be bitterly resented by public opinion in England, as Granville well knew. He wrote to his chief that he did not think the Cabinet could with propriety receive the communication of such an idea from Prussia without recording its objections.¹

Since nothing but the realization of a *contretemps* had been gained by dispatches, the French welcomed the suggestion of the veteran diplomatist, M. Thiers, that he go to England and then to other countries to plead the cause of the last of the many Governments to which he had given allegiance. And so while the Conservative journals were

¹ Granville to Gladstone, Sept. 16, 1870, Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 49-51; Fleury, *Memoirs of Empress Eugénie*, vol. ii, pp. 525-526.

urging on England mediation, even to the point of forcing consideration for her pacific intentions by dint of arms, and their Liberal opponents were representing that her part was rather to soothe French susceptibilities on the matter of an inevitable loss of territory, a new attack on the policy of passivity was launched from across the Channel. M. Thiers was preceded by an agent sent to pave the way for him. This precursor reported on his return that for Gladstone and Granville France as a nation no longer existed. "They were polite," he said sadly, "but seemed to think we were blotted from the map of Europe."¹ He seems not to have been made aware that Thiers, in spite of his long practice in diplomacy, was, perhaps, not the most appropriate man for France to send on an important mission. His part in doing to death a former republic certainly would not make him *persona grata* with the eager friends of France that met in St. James' Hall. Thirty years ago he had fallen from power because he could not win support for a policy which was on the point of precipitating his country into war with England. Even by those whose minds were not disturbed by memories, it was recognized that he was totally out of sympathy with the economic theories of Bright and Gladstone; and that he had done what he could to make his opposition felt. In regard to the present war, he was regarded by the *Evening Mail* as its ultimate cause, —the man, who above all others, had developed "that baleful idea of French dictatorship in Europe which was at once the secret of the power of the Emperor Napoleon and the immediate occasion of his downfall."² The *Daily News* saw a certain poetic and dramatic justice in the spectacle of this historian and statesman, who thirty years ago was meditating a sudden attack upon the British fleet in

¹ Felix Whitehurst, *My Private Diary* (London, 1875), vol. i, p. 91.

² *Evening Mail*, Oct. 7, 1870.

the Mediterranean, making a diplomatic tour in his old age as a suppliant for the moral intervention of the neutral Powers to save his country from the consequences of that vainglorious and aggressive spirit and policy, of which he had ever been the most eloquent and powerful advocate. He was likened now in his old age to that intrusive old peace-maker, Touchwood, in one of Scott's romances. "Don't be afraid of me," says Touchwood,

though I come thus suddenly upon you, I acknowledge that my talents and experience have sometimes made me play the busy-body, because I find I can do things better than other people, and I love to see fellows stare. But after all, I am *un bon diable*, and I have come four or five hundred miles to put all your little matters to rights just when you think they are most desperate.¹

But M. Thiers had swallowed too much of criticism to be greatly perturbed by these bitter spoonfuls administered by the British press. He was encouraged, too, by the kindly reception and good hopes extended him by papers representing so many and so diverse interests as the *Times*, the *Telegraph*, the *Record*, the *Examiner*, and *Saunders*'.² If the *News* refused to dignify his visit by calling it a mission, he could take comfort that in the *Standard* he was dubbed an Ambassador Extraordinary.³

He did not wait upon Lord Granville when he arrived in London until he had talked with an old friend about his chances of success. He spoke to him of England's duty to support France in the interest of the balance of power. But his friend broke in abruptly to tell him to put such notions out of his head, for England now had no interest in them.⁴ Perhaps it was this warning that deterred Thiers

¹ *Daily News*, Sept. 14, 1870.

² Issues of Sept. 14, 16, 17 and 15, respectively.

³ *Standard*, Sept. 14, 1870.

⁴ Robt. Wilson, *Life and Times of Queen Victoria* (London, 1887-88), vol. ii, p. 871; *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1884, vol. xxxv, p. 418.

from asking for active intervention. Perhaps it was the cold courtesy of the British Foreign Minister who refused to concede the envoy's argument that the war had been due entirely to the Empire, and that the downfall of Napoleon removed any justification of its continuance. It is doubtful whether the French diplomatist's endeavour to cast a sombre pall of responsibility over the defunct Empire was as fortunate a choice of argument as would have been an effort to dress forth with his keen wit some quite live arguments for Prussian responsibility that slumbered in the record of the negotiations preceding war's outbreak. Instead of the active intervention, which Granville was certainly prepared to refuse, Thiers urged immediate recognition of the Republic, and the exertion by England of that moral influence which, when supported by the Neutral Powers that only waited on her leadership, would surely oppose an irresistible barrier to Prussian aggression. Both were refused him. On the petitioner's own argument Lord Granville had good reason for the first denial. For Thiers had urged nothing more in favor of the *de facto* Government than its present expediency,—a republic represented everybody at a time of crisis. His second request he urged with better logic and far greater eloquence. Even by reading Granville's report of the interview one can see that Thiers's heart was in that plea. But he found the Foreign Minister guided by a policy of inertia. "In other days," Thiers wrote Jules Favre, "England would have shuddered with indignation at the idea of allowing so great a revolution as was accomplishing itself to be fulfilled without taking the part in it proper to a great Power. Today, while recognizing that Prussia is becoming formidable, she prefers to shut her eyes and ears rather than to see it or hear it said The idea of a great war dismays her, and the thought of taking a step that might meet with a rebuff dismays

her almost as much as war itself.”¹ The net result of his interviews in England was Granville’s promise to deliver a message from the French Government requesting an interview with Bismarck, and to accompany it with words of satisfaction at thus aiding a meeting which would afford the best means of making each party acquainted with the other’s demands and so arriving at an honorable peace.²

With this sop, M. Thiers set out on his circular visit to the Continental capitals,—an “old Orleanist premier,” the *Dublin Review* described him, “starting on his hopeless cruise from court to court in search of an ally, at the bidding of two boisterous barristers, who have been suddenly flung from the gutter into the Louvre.”³ At St. Petersburg he was even less successful than in London, and *Pall Mall* published a squib about his visit there that must have annoyed Lord Tennyson:

“Thiers, idle Thiers, I know not what you mean—
Thiers, claiming pity from the ruthless bear!
Thiers, idle Thiers, you gather in my eyes
A fatal likeness to the autumn fields
Where chaff is found, but golden grain no more.”⁴

At Vienna he found himself at table with the Prussian historian, von Ranke, and made bold to remonstrate with him on the inconsistency of his country in pursuing hostilities when the author of the war and the Government he headed had become things of the past. “On whom, pray, do you then make war?” he ended. “On Louis XIV,” was the grim answer.⁵ The story was told with gusto by the

¹ *Memoirs of Louis Adolphe Thiers, 1870-1873* (London, 1915), pp. 11-12.

² Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 53-57.

³ *Dublin Review*, Oct., 1870, vol. xv, pp. 479-496.

⁴ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Oct. 7, 1870.

⁵ *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1871, *The German Empire*, vol. cxxxiii, pp. 459 *et seq.*

friends of Prussia in England. Not only these men, but many who argued against them for the merits of the French case, approved the outcome of the London mission. The claims of the belligerents differed so widely that, as Gladstone said, it could not be considered an offense that England did not interfere and unreservedly second pretensions of which she could not approve.¹ Much was hoped from the personal interviews so soon to be arranged. The Prussian King disclaimed ambition, the Republic was intense in its eagerness for peace. If both were honest, peace must come speedily.

Edward Malet, Second Secretary of the British Legation in Paris, was chosen to bear the message sent from Granville through Lord Lyons, and the French despatch from Favre. Sir Edmund Blount was glad to see him go, for Paris was almost invested and he hoped that Prussia would ask moderate concessions and not insist on terms to which the French populace would not allow their Government to accede. He believed that Malet carried despatches not only from England and France, but from Russia also. However that may have been, the courier arrived in due time with his weighty documents at the Prussian outposts. The camp was in an excellent temper. Dr. Russell had come back only recently from a visit to London bringing with him "congratulations and reassuring news."² There was current a rumor that the defence of Paris had been abandoned, and though this had been contradicted, it was still believed. So it came about that on the morning of the sixth when Archibald Forbes, while riding on the

¹ Gladstone to Chevalier, Sept., 1870, Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, pp. 343, 344.

² *Memoirs of Sir Edmund Blount*, p. 175.

³ Journals of Field Marshal, Count von Blumenthal (translated by Maj. Gillespie Addison, London, 1903), p. 122.

outskirts of the camp with a hussar officer, saw a little posse of French lancers following a civilian who bore a white flag, he believed the emissary had come in confirmation of the soldiers' gossip. But Mr. Malet, before leaving the next morning, told him the true reason of his visit.¹ He, perhaps, reported something more of success than might be implied from that day's entry in the journal of Field Marshal, Count Blumenthal: "An English Attaché was with Bismarck this morning. He had brought some communications, regarding an armistice, but he was soon warned off."²

Bismarck had really consented to the personal interview that Granville recommended. Three days later a very different sort of messenger arrived in Paris. It was Captain Johnson with despatches that probably gave instructions to Lord Lyons as to the British attitude toward the negotiations. As he was driven down the Faubourg St. Honoré in an open calèche he attracted the vociferous attention of French pedestrians. A postilion bestrode one of his horses, wearing his hair à la Catogan, and tricked out in a jacket with scarlet facings, a gold-banded hat, huge boots, and all the appurtenances that were now seen only behind the footlights or at a masquerade. Vizetelly, who watched his approach to the Embassy, was all for singing a snatch from a comic opera, "*Oh, oh, oh, qu'il était beau*"—but the Parisians were looking on the semi-military gentleman in the calèche with suspicion. By some illogic of wartime psychology, they believed him a Prussian spy and wanted to stop his carriage and march him off to prison. But Captain Johnson flourished his cane in a very menacing manner and the German porter of the Embassy came to his

¹ Archibald Forbes, *My Experience of the War between France and Germany*, vol. i, pp. 280-282.

² *Journals of Count von Blumenthal*, p. 127.

assistance, so that he finally drove in triumph into the courtyard that was under the protection of the Queen of England.¹ The bold captain seems to have become impatient of his threatrical trappings, that not only roused the suspicion of the French but the laughter of his own countrymen. "Why," wondered Felix Whitehurst, "do they dress the Queen's messenger like King George the Third, or the old two penny postmen in the Windsor uniform, and stick V. R. in their caps?" Captain Johnson was given the refusal of a washerwoman's cart and donkey for his return journey, and seriously considered accepting it.

But we must not linger over his picturesque difficulties, for the day of his arrival in Paris (September the nineteenth) Jules Favre and Count Bismarck were discussing things of grave importance at Ferrières, the county-seat of Baron Alphonse de Rothschild. Jules Favre was eager for a peace, but failing that he would have welcomed an armistice for the convoking of a Constituent Assembly that would give to his Government the national approval which England had declared essential for her recognition. Count Bismarck was eager, also, that France be ruled by something more than a Provisional Government when the time came for treaty making. But he demanded that it give promise of being of a character to his liking. He could afford to show some indifference, since as he cynically protested, already he had two Governments—one at Wilhelmshöhe and one at Paris. Bismarck demanded Strasburg, the two departments of the Bas and Haut Rhin, and a part of Moselle, including Metz, Chateau Salins, and Soissons. As a guarantee while his terms were under discussion, he asked the occupation of Strasburg,—the garrison of which should surrender,—Toul,

¹ E. A. Vizetelly, *My Days of Adventure*, pp. 106-107; Julian Kune, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile*, pp. 200-207.

² Felix Whitehurst, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 151, 178.

Phalsburg, and a fortress dominating Paris.¹ On the nineteenth there was published in the *Standard* an interview that the great Chancellor had granted its correspondent in which he had declared that Metz and Strasburg would be demanded of France to ensure Prussia from future attack. This much the public was allowed for guessing what might pass at Ferrières. Lord Lyons wrote on this day that he believed a loss of territory and a French humiliation would be great evils and sources of danger, but he did not wish to aggravate difficulties by holding out hopes that British mediation could overcome them.² This was a clear endorsement of the opinion Bismarck had stated in a manifesto on the mission of Thiers,³ and it seems to have been shared also by the Government in London. For no representation on the rigorous Prussian conditions was made by the Ministry. The day after the interview's conclusion, it is true, the Queen sent a belated telegram to King William, expressing the hope that he might be able to shape such conditions as the vanquished might accept. The King replied courteously but insisted that he must place in the first line the protection of Germany against the next attack of France, which he believed no generosity would be able to deter.⁴

Jules Favre announced the results of the Ferrières interview at the same time that he announced the more or less negative results of the mission of Thiers. He had not been able to accept the terms either for a peace or for a truce, and though he claimed that four of the members

¹ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 62; *Times*, Sept. 26, 1870.

² Lyons to Granville, Sept. 19, 1870, Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. i, p. 323.

³ *Annual Register* for 1870, vol. cxii, p. 127.

⁴ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 45-47.

of the League of Neutrals showed a willingness to intervene directly on the basis of conditions he had proposed, two had refused the coöperation that was needed to make the agreement of the others available. He believed, however, that the interview was not barren of result if it had had the effect of removing the misconceptions of Prussia's intentions which had prevailed among the Neutrals.¹ In the Prussian camp, there existed some fear, apparently, of how the news of the Ferrières meeting might be received. Dr. Russell noted in his diary a slight apprehension and great irritation lest the European Powers should make an effort at intervention.² But in the gaining of allies, surely, nothing succeeds like success, and, in spite of the optimistic declarations of her press, French affairs were at low ebb. The surrender of Toul was imminent, Strasburg was in flames, Paris completely invested, and Marseilles in revolt. Things being in this desperate plight, a great many British agreed with Mr. Lowe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that it was not opportune for Ministers to sit all day round a table covered with green cloth, with wax tapers burning, perpetually receiving and sending forth telegrams. There were three courses open to England as a Neutral, he said. She might become an arbitrator at the request of both belligerents; she might herself assume authority and intervene; or she might mediate by means of good offices proffered in the interests of both sides. It was this last course she had chosen to pursue, and there was no necessity for expenditure of candle power to light her on her way.³ Who could help France, said the *Times*, when disregarding her own danger and the advantage of an armistice, she re-

¹ Favre to Members of Government of National Defense, Sept. 21, 1870; *Brit. State Papers*, lxxi, pp. 105-110.

² W. H. Russell, *My Diary during the Last Great War*, pp. 326-327.

³ *Times*, Sept. 22, 1870.

jected Count Bismarck's terms.¹ The *Guardian* rejoiced that the Ministers refused to be hustled or dragged into unwelcome efforts at mediation or the greater perils of forcible intervention.² But there were other papers which found Mr. Lowe's exposition of the attitude of his Government far from satisfying. He had done no more, said the *Globe*, than say that mediation was an uncommonly perilous business. What the public really wished to know was at what point England could be expected to allow her energy to take a more substantial form than fear.³ The *Spectator* complained of the wish for a neutrality so punctilious that it feared to trench on silence, lest some clue be given which might encourage one of the belligerents. The *Spectator* believed it would be better that Germany should know clearly, and in the most authoritative way, how fast she was losing England's sympathy.⁴ As for the cheese-paring economy secured through the light-saving of the present diplomacy, *Pall Mall* and other journals thought that the moderate expenditure on candles which a weekly meeting at the green table involved would not be held amiss. In Vienna, Florence, and St. Petersburg cabinets were in daily session.⁵

By far the strongest answer to the much discussed speech Mr. Lowe had made at Elgin appeared in a carefully worded letter to the *Times* from Sir Henry Bulwer. He regretted the absence of the Ministers from the capital, but made no reference to their inconsequential activities in partridge shooting and seashore studies. He regretted, also, that Parliament was not in session. "I have great confidence

¹ *Times*, Sept. 26, 1870.

² *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 19, 1870.

³ *Globe*, Sept. 19, 1870.

⁴ *Spectator*, Sept. 24, 1870.

⁵ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 19, 1870; *Once a Week*, Sept. 24, 1870.

in Mr. Gladstone," he said, "and great confidence in Lord Granville; but their fault in Foreign Affairs, if they have any, is not presumption." He doubted if they would have full confidence in themselves without being in legitimate communication with the nation. He believed the rights of Europe paramount to those of France and Prussia, and urged that national interests were so intermingled that intervention, if ever it could be justifiable, had now become so. Albeit, the letter closed with a plea only for mediation.¹ Its readers were rather dubious as to just what Sir Henry Bulwer wished. The *Evening Mail* thought he demanded too much of England in expecting her to ascertain the least that Prussia would accept and the most that France could surrender. If she should fare badly in her self-imposed task, would she not have to resort to force to save herself from humiliation?² The *News* attempted to dismiss Sir Henry as an ancient disciple of Talleyrand, who dearly loved his Paris and could not endure that "the capital of civilization and *petit soupers*" should be besieged, but who dared not plainly state his wish for an armed intervention.³ *Saunders'*, though believing his suggestions unsound, appraised him as being rather more than an Epicurean follower of adhorred French diplomacy,—a man instead, who was "rich in experience and loaded with all the distinctions of a long diplomatic life."⁴ The letter was described by the *Scotsman* as an excellent piece of writing but a very indefinite guide to action. Ministers and people in general were called upon to do something but no intimation was given of just what they ought to do or what would happen to them if they did it.⁵

¹ Sept. 21, 1870.

² *Evening Mail*, Sept. 23, 1870.

³ *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 28, 1870.

⁴ *Saunders's*, Sept. 29, 1870.

⁵ *Weekly Scotsman*, Oct. 1, 1870.

A letter printed a few days later attempted to clear away the alleged ambiguity of its predecessor. Sir Henry, it seemed, wished England to discard her neutrality, and become the "friend of both belligerents," to substitute a more difficult rôle for one already overtaxing her. In the mediation, which he urged that she attempt, he wished her neither to proclaim that she meant only to talk, nor to bully and swagger and employ a town crier to go about saying that she did not mean to fight. He was impatient of supinely waiting for a time suitable for good offices. He had never known a timid rider to find a good opportunity for trying his horse at a stiff fence, and, it was said, the more the rider looked at it, the less he liked it.¹ The paper warfare waged by the advocates of the albino-like policy of the albino Minister, Mr. Lowe, and the more decided and more dangerous course suggested by the picturesque Sir Henry, roused the echoes in many journals. That the latter's eloquence did not win more to his ranks from his own class was due, in part, as the *Saturday Review* well pointed out, to French impropriety in exchanging polite communications with the English Republican malcontents and the Irish Fenians. They especially disliked the recognition accorded Mr. Odger as the bearer of a "semi diplomatic message from a fraction of the London rabble."²

It was on the twenty-seventh of the month, while the controversy was at its height, that the public was amazed at the impudence of the London Trades Societies in sending a deputation to advise the Prime Minister on his foreign policy. It was on this day, too, that the English papers published the circular of von Thile, who, presiding at Berlin in Bismarck's absence, gave out the Prussian account of

¹ *Times*, Oct. 1, 1870. A second letter had appeared in the issue of Sept. 27, 1870.

² *Saturday Review*, Oct. 1, 1870.

the Ferrières interview. The circular, of course, threw the blame for the continuance of the war on the unreasoned stubbornness of the Government of National Defence. The *Standard* and the *Daily Telegraph* believed it would have no other effect than to create enthusiasm in the "beer houses in which stay-at-home warriors formulate the policy and screw up the purpose of the German armies."¹ To others it seemed to confirm the opinion that M. Jules Favre had more of heart than head,—that his lachrymal ducts were in a higher state of development than his cerebrum.

On the day the Prussian circular was first discussed in London, Lyons was engaged in sending to Granville a communication from this same emotional Jules Favre. France, he said, had been encouraged by the Foreign Powers to address herself directly to Count Bismarck. The result had been a painful humiliation. "The ambition of Prussia and her desire to destroy France were now patent to the world and entitled his country to appeal to Europe for support. The Powers should speak to Prussia with unmistakable firmness and take measures to ensure that they be heeded."² Her willingness to make every reasonable sacrifice exculpated France from blame for future disasters. It was a strong letter, and the fact that Strasburg was forced to capitulate on the day it was written did its part in further strengthening it. The Cabinet was summoned to meet on the thirtieth,—a date so unusually early that the *News* feared the public might conclude that intervention was contemplated.³ In spite of the denial of the Liberal papers, many did think so, and certainly there was more reason for their belief than there had been at any previous time. M. Favre had the support of the Austrian Minister

¹ Issues of Sept. 27, 1870.

² *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, p. 99.

³ *Daily News*, Oct. 1, 1870.

of Foreign Affairs, who had already suggested the opportuneness of collective mediation at St. Petersburg and London.¹ In Russia there was a strong current in favor of France, as Sir Horace Rumbold, the secretary to the British embassy, noted. But it is safe to assume that she could not have been won to action unless the efforts of the other Neutrals so strengthened this current as to have swept away the barriers of official opposition. In England, Gladstone, himself, strongly opposed the transfer of territory or inhabitants by mere force. Such a policy called for the reprobation of Europe, he wrote John Bright, and Europe was entitled to utter it, and could utter it with good effect.² His views on the territorial cession had the support of the majority of the British press. The *Standard*, the *Globe*, and the *Economist* being especially notable for their denunciation of the Prussian claims,³ while *Pall Mall*, in its zeal to refute them, crossed the Rhine to cite arguments from such authorities as Grotius and Puffendorf.⁴ The *Times* looked on the transfer as a necessary evil.⁵ The *News*, alone, pretended to see justice in it, claiming France was protected by no favoured-nation clause that made inviolate her territory.⁶

But Gladstone failed to carry his Cabinet with him in his wish to join with other Neutral Powers in remonstrance of Prussia's avowed intentions. It was Lord Granville, according to that gentlemen's biographer, who persuaded him

¹ Sir Horace Rumbold, *Recollections of a Diplomatist* (London, 1902), vol. ii, p. 292.

² Gladstone to Bright, Sept. 30, 1870, Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, p. 346; see also *ibid.*, pp. 346-348.

³ See especially editorials in issues of Sept. 8, 6 and 24, 1870, respectively.

⁴ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 20, 1870.

⁵ *Times*, Sept. 23, 1870. For expressions of different views in the same paper, see the editorials of July 11, Sept. 16 and 21, 1870.

⁶ *Daily News*, Sept. 15, 1870.

to refrain from any official expression of his abhorrence of the cession of provinces against the wishes of their inhabitants.¹ And so there was necessity for only a single meeting of the Cabinet. The Ministers separated, said the *Times*, with the conviction that the time had not yet come for the abandonment of their policy of "observant neutrality."² Sir Henry Bulwer and others thought differently, and the *Times* continued to give space to their ideas, but it was very impatient of them. They reminded its editor of the woman who confused her husband when his affairs were greatly embarrassed by repeating with nervous energy, "Do something, my dear! Do something!" In its semi-official capacity it declared with hearty approval that England had discarded the so long and so meticulously guarded principle of the European balance and was resolved to rejoice in the free and healthy growth of her neighbors. If Cinderella's sisters, making heroic and bloody preparations for trying on the crystal slipper, had heard the Prince's courier extol the beauty of "free and healthy growth" they would, perhaps, have experienced the same feelings that France had when she read these tidings. England had elected to do nothing at all, but the *Times* and the *News*, it would seem, were determined that she assume a posy attitude in doing it. The reason for this vain posturing was that the Conservative leaders had become very active. The Earls of Carnarvon and Derby had gone to London to confer with Disraeli.³ The leaders of the *Standard* and the letters of Sir Henry Bulwer were increasingly annoying. There was such a swell of public sympathy for France that fear was felt that Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli might ride the tide to office. But Parliament was not in session, the

¹ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 63.

² *Times*, Oct. 1, 1870.

³ *N. Y. Herald*, London correspondent, Oct. 3, 1870.

by elections were carefully postponed, and for the time being France and the British public had to be content with Granville's decision to offer mediation only when it was plainly apparent that both belligerents would welcome it. "The object of the Provisional Government," he wrote to Lyons, "appears to be that Neutral Powers should, if needful, support by force any representations that they might make to Prussia. Her Majesty's Government are bound to state explicitly that they themselves are not prepared to adopt any such means, or to propose it to other Neutral Powers."¹ As for according formal recognition to the hard-pressed Government of France, Great Britain must postpone that until such a time as France, having recognized it herself by a duly elected Assembly, could justly urge its claims upon the Neutrals.² Until such a time England would continue to date her passports the second of September. His country, said Sir Robert Morier, had become a bit of wet blotting paper amongst the nations, and it upset his serenity, and made him wish to be a Maori or a Turco, both of whom were possessed of some kind of individuality and self-assertion.³

¹ Granville to Lyons, Oct. 4, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 116-117.

² Granville to Lyons, Oct. 1, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxxi, p. 111.

³ *Memoirs of Sir Robert Morier*, vol. ii, p. 206.

CHAPTER X

WAR À OUTRANCE

IN October *London Society* reported that the war news, which had lately held its own against the grouse, was now opposing a sturdy resistance to the partridge. More people were in town than was usual in such an unfashionably early month. Mrs. Lloyd-Lindsay wrote that it was possible to assemble at a dinner at the German Embassy, Gladstone, Granville, two or three ambassadors, Delane, Hayward, and other notables. Except for a lack of dinner partners for these eminent guests, it was quite as though it had been the middle of the season.¹ The city was agog with the war. Excitement reached its height when the evening papers began to appear. In the leading thoroughfares—east and west—nearly every man had a broad or a narrow sheet in his hand, perusing it on the pavement. There were letters to be read from special correspondents, “our own correspondents;” leading articles devoted to different branches of the war; discussions of England’s own military system; financial articles,—very dull these, because uncertainty kept trade slack; lists of subscriptions in aid of the sick and wounded; advertisements of French refugees who wished to dispose of their jewelry or find employment as chefs, governesses, or in “any honorable capacity whatever.”

¹ Harriet S. Wantage, *Lord Wantage, a Memoir* (London, 1907), pp. 188-189.

John Bull read them all. He knew more of the war's happenings than was known in Germany and infinitely more than was known in France. He was being hurried through mighty pages of history at express-rate speed and was doing his best to keep his grip on things.¹ Perhaps he should have been devoting all his attention, these mid-autumn days, to the Imperial Manifesto and the Bismarck Circular, but he was very human and his interest was not always in constant attendance on the things that had most claim on it. The *Evening Mail*² and the *Weekly Freeman* acknowledged early in October that they were bored by the war. Its epic interest had expired at Sedan. At times Paterfamilias was wearied also. He had no mind to go home and change the pins in his wall map to accord with the latest telegrams. It was fatiguing to note the progress all in one way and the superabundance of the Prussian colours. The month was to see the defeat of the French at Arthenay and at Soissons, Orleans occupied, the surrender of Chateaudon and Schelstadt, and at the last, the capitulation of Metz, with its garrison of six thousand officers and a hundred and sixty-seven thousand men. The whole thing seemed an outrage on the sporting instincts of our honest Englishman.

He was tired, too, of having Herr Bismarck's face stare at him from the window of every printshop. On each account of a fresh Prussian victory the visage of the Chancellor made its reappearance and seemed, alas, to have gained nothing of beauty during its retirement. Some shops, said the *News*, had whole strings of Bismarck's, like

¹ *London Society*, Oct., 1870, *England during the War*, vol. xviii, pp. 384 et seq.; *All the Year Round*, Oct. 15, 1870, p. 473.

² *Evening Mail*, Oct. 4, 1870.

³ *Weekly Freeman's Journal*, Oct. 8, 1870.

ropes of onions.¹ There were always enough others who were not tired and would buy them for their table albums. Enough others, too, to buy the patriotic songs that were printed in sheets and sold at a penny apiece.

Paterfamilias was especially disgruntled at the omnipresent *Marseillaise*. It was rendered on barrel-organs before his front door in the time of a dirge, or by a clarinet afflicted as with yelping spasms in the high register and with sudden mournful eructations in the lower notes, and its effect was distinctly depressing. He was glad when the *News* protested against this conversion of a splendid anthem into a clamorous invocation for coppers.² Gustave Doré was exhibiting what purported to be an idealization of the song—an idealization described by the *Art Journal* as a masculine, disreputable, undressed harridan with a large sword and banner, and a painfully distended mouth.³ Paterfamilias was inclined to believe it a very realistic presentment of the *Marseillaise* as he knew it. At Agricultural Hall the war was illustrated by a morning panorama of its principal scenes, and at North Woolwich there was an al-fresco painting of Weissenbourg and a representation of the battle with real fire and real British volunteers to take the part of the combatants.⁴ At Mme. Tussaud's they were consantly adding new figures to the military contingent of the wax works.⁵

In the comic journals the gods of battle took on a more fantastic turn, and the awful Bismarck and his royal master brought a disrespectful chuckle from some who at

¹ *Daily News*, Oct. 18, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1870.

³ *Art Journal*, Oct., 1870.

⁴ *London Society*, Oct. 1, 1870, *England during the War*, pp. 384 et seq.

⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 19, 1870; John T. Tussaud, *Romance of Mme. Tussaud's* (London, 1920), chap. xxii, *passim*.

first had accorded them only awed admiration.¹ If idols can be kept in darkened recesses or exhibited only behind a cloud of incense when men's heads are lowered, a coat of gilding may be sufficient to cover feet of clay. But an idol brought to the market place to furnish forth copy for every paper of the United Kingdom has need to be one hundred percent fine gold from top to toe. When King William had prostrated himself in prayer and humiliation, and heralded his entrance into war with a pious proclamation of his honorable intentions, he had been exalted by many sincere Britishers to a position only a little lower than the angels. They experienced now a feeling of annoyance at the profuse thanks he rendered Providence for each of his various victories. It was esteemed an unmannerly presumption that Prussia, having the services of Bismarck and von Moltke, should lay claim also to a monopoly of the Divine guardianship.

The fact that Bazeilles was burned on the day of Sedan, with a horrible thoroughness which made its name soon known throughout the world,² encouraged the British to deride the king's devotion. "Providence be thanked," he had telegraphed to his Queen on the great day, whereupon *Punch* misquoted him in this wise:

"Thanks be to God,
My dear Augusta,
We've had another awful bluster;
Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below,
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"³

It was related that a wounded prisoner, writhing in agony,

¹ The cartoons of Sir Arthur Tenniel in *Punch* are especially clever.

² C. E. Ryan, *With an Ambulance in the Franco-German War*, pp. 88-89; *Graphic*, Sept. 10, 1870; *Athenaeum*, Dec. 24, 1870; *Spectator*, Sept. 17, 1870; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 21, 1870; *Saunders'*, Sept. 24, 1870; *Annual Register* for 1870, vol. xvii, p. 189.

³ *Punch*, Sept. 3, 1870.

called out on God to aid him: "Why do you call on God?" said his next neighbor, "Don't you know He has forsaken us and gone over to the Prussians?"¹ England could not think so. She disliked the orders to fire villages as a means of making peasants hunt out the *franc tireurs*. She did not like requisitions enforced by terror. A Protestant pastor vouched for the truth of the horrors suffered by the hundreds of homeless after the burning of the village of Chérizy.²

Strasburg had been bombarded in spite of the appeals of its Bishop to General Werder. Its starving citizens had been denied the privilege of seeking a place of safety before the guns were fired.³ The Art Gallery and the Cathedral had not been able to resist the bombs of the pious King William. An estimate of the damage done to them was given in the *Athenaeum*.⁴ But the loss of the Library was considered irreparable. Its wonderful collection of incunabula and manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could never be replaced. The Alsatians, themselves, claimed that it, with the Cathedral, had been made the special targets for artillery fired under General Werder's orders. The *Bookworm* inveighed against the conscious destruction of a priceless collection by a lieutenant of the "God-fearing, God-mouthed King of Prussia."⁵ Ruskin published his opinion of the Prussian commander who had succumbed to the tempting target which the famous buildings made in the glare of the flaming city. He found no

¹ *The Monthly Packet of Evening Readings*, March, 1871.

² *Spectator*, Oct. 29, 1870; see also *Times*, Oct. 28, 1870, Jan. 11, 1871.

³ *Manchester Guardian* and *Daily Telegraph* of Sept. 2, 1870.

⁴ *Athenaeum*, Nov. 19, 1870, vol. xliv, p. 662.

⁵ *Bookworm*, Sept., 1870, *The Burning of the Strasburg Library*, pp. 138-139; *Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 7, 1870.

consolation in the news that the Parisians would attempt to repair the losses by casting a great bronze Strasburg.¹

The *Times* made it an opportunity for sententiously reminding the Prussians that the gratification of military honour should not be accompanied by the debasement of their moral qualities.² *Vanity Fair*, in adding the portrait of the Crown Prince to its gallery of notables, remarked that the English might have wished another husband for the Princess Royal than the fighting heir of a despotic and aggressive monarch.³ It was hoped he would not send her battle loot. Stories came back that showed the invaders found it particularly difficult to resist the acquisition of impedimenta. Where professional soldiers had stolen for self alone, the home-loving German requisitioned with a loving memory of wife and children that induced a more painstaking thoroughness.⁴

The most telling expression of the changed estimate of the Prussian military that was taking place between July and October appears in the statements of two young Englishmen who had been so fired with enthusiasm for King William's cause at the war's beginning that they had attached themselves to the Prussian armies. One was Sir Charles Dilke, who had hoped for fine things from future alliance with "our brothers in America," and "our kinsmen in Germany and Scandinavia," but became disgusted at the arrogance and aggressiveness of the Prussians after their first victories. There was in the Prince's suite, he wrote, a celebrated German Liberal, the writer and politician, Gustav Freytag, who had the bad taste to wear the

¹ *Academy*, Oct. 1, 1870, pp. 431 *et seq.*; *Temple Bar*, Nov., 1870, vol. xxx, p. 548; *All the Year Round*, Sept. 10, 1870.

² Oct. 18, 1870.

³ *Vanity Fair*, Sept. 24, 1870.

⁴ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 21, 1870.

Legion of Honour in the invaded country, and made himself further obnoxious by his constant patriotic exultation. Dilke and Auberon Herbert, who was with him, soon deserted their ambulance corps, and the former was in Paris in time to witness the September revolution.¹ There was, also, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, who returned to England in October and made public acknowledgment of the shift of his sympathy to France. He believed that if German opinion had not been tampered with by governmental influences, it would have shown a strong dislike for territorial spoil, but that the scheme, originated in the King's Cabinet, had been advanced so cunningly that the acquisition of Alsace and Lorraine was now considered a national necessity. He testified to the Prussian demoralization in victory as being so great as to justify the loss of sympathy he, and many other Englishmen, had felt.²

A great deal was being said just then of French degeneracy, of which Lord Fitzmaurice professed himself incompetent to judge. The English proved as adept as the Gaul in seeking out a woman on whom to put the blame for the disaster. Lord Granville and many others named the Empress as the cause of war, and linked with her as entriguants the names of various high dignitaries of the Roman Church, or that of Marshal Leboeuf, as inclination led them.³ All made much of the luxury Eugénie had sponsored and that had so conspicuously flaunted itself on the Parisian boulevards.

¹ Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of Rt. Hon. Sir Chas. Dilke*, vol. i, pp. 104-108.

² Letter to *Pall Mall Gazette*, Oct. 18, 1870; for criticisms of letter, see Lord Carlingford to Lear, Oct. 19, 1870, *Later Letters of Edward Lear*, p. 126; *Examiner and London Review*, Oct. 22, 1870.

³ Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, pp. 51, 388; Earl of Malmesbury, G. C. B., *Memoirs of an ex-Minister*, vol. ii, pp. 415-416. Cf. Dr. Evans, *Second Empire*, pp. 167-168; see also Spencer Walpole, *History of Twenty-five Years*, vol. ii, pp. 492-493.

wards.¹ There were those who said the loose morals that went unrebuked at Court were emulated by the soldiers, who marched away wreathed and fettered by the garlands that had been flung round them by their women, who ran beside them, singing, to the station. A number of professional dancers had come over from Paris and were astounding London audiences by a certain set of contortions which were at first described as the French national dance. In October, after a good deal of editorial preaching, the magistrates were induced to revoke the licenses of the Alhambra and Highbury Barn, that had housed the chief offenders.² But it is safe to say that these irresponsible refugees had already done not a little to strengthen the disapprobation of the British who crowded the stalls to see them. Lady Churchill wrote that a more exclusive audience was equally entertained and shocked by the doings and sayings of two pretty and lively refugees, who with their husbands, preferred shooting birds in England to being shot at in France. They had taken a place in the country and the ladies astonished the sober yokels by hunting in kilts and puffing away at little cigarettes. They were of a very sprightly humour and the practical jokes that they played in exile were not over-nice in their regard for British propriety.³ The English marvelled at the antics of these exponents of a civilization that was on trial for its very life. There were those who pointed out that it had produced and applauded that frail heroine of romance, Mlle. de Maupin.⁴ The arch-moralist, Rossetti, was very

¹ *Lady John Russell, a Memoir*, p. 230; Mrs. El. Lecky, *Memoir of W. E. H. Lecky*, p. 85.

² *Daily News*, Sept. 20, 1870; *Examiner and London Review*, Oct. 15, 1870.

³ Mrs. George Cornwallis West, *Reminiscences of Lady Randolph Churchill*, p. 28.

⁴ Andrew Lang, *Théophile Gautier, Dark Blue*, March, 1871, pp. 27 et seq.

sure that Mme Bovary¹ was somehow culpable for the deep sorrow of poor France. The impotence of Favre's tears before Bismarck, the amusing spectacle of Thiers,—drumming the merits of the new Republic before the rulers of Europe and finding little interest in his sample case,—were believed by many, even of those who wished it otherwise, to indicate that France must speedily succumb to the aggressive virility of her neighbour. Delane was speculating on just what day in October Paris would give the signal for surrender.²

England was abruptly startled from her melancholy musings by the aerial flight of Gambetta from Paris to Tours. There was a whistling of hostile bullets when his balloon cleared St. Denis, and at Creil the Prussians succeeded in piercing it, and in grazing Gambetta's hand, but finally, early in the afternoon of October the seventh, it descended near Montdidier to catch in an oak tree and leave the Minister hanging head downwards with his legs clutched round the ropes of the car. The peasants, who believed him a Prussian, were reassured by the sight of the tricolour and the sound of a hearty *Vive la République*. They assisted him to the ground and cheered him that evening when he was driven away to his destination. "Honour to the brave!" exclaimed the *London Illustrated News*, and forthwith dubbed the new deliverer the "Minister of the Balloon."³ It was natural that so theatrical a descent of the Minister of the Interior should arouse the good-natured raillery of the British. Gambetta was called a political athlete, a winged messenger, and was congratulated on having experienced no more serious "reverse" on his

¹ Ford Madox Huefer, *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections* (London, 1911), p. 182.

² Dasent, *John Delane*, vol. ii, p. 270.

³ *Illustrated London News*, Oct. 15, 1870.

journey than the awkward episode of the inhospitable oak tree.¹

It was soon recognized, however, that Gambetta must be taken seriously,—that he had accumulated all the authority from Tours to Marseilles into his hands, and that his success in using it would determine the fate of the Republic.² His proclamations began to be read and criticized as carefully as those of the great Chancellor himself. They offered a striking contrast to the Chancellor's. As the *Examiner* said, if Count Bismarck revelled in the inexorable, M. Gambetta outdistanced all competitors in the field of official boast. The one appealed to horror, the other to hope.³ The *Record* found Bismarck's pronunciamientos hard, exultant, and arrogant.⁴ The *Spectator* said that the famous iron and blood not only backed his diplomacy but seemed to enter into it.⁵ In October he issued a sort of disclaimer of German responsibility for the dreadful suffering that he foresaw for Paris. She would be reduced to starvation, he said, and the besiegers would not be able to afford help to her famished populace.⁶ Gambetta's proclamation showed another picture. Paris was, indeed, somewhat bored at not having its letters daily, and its fresh vegetables so plenteously. It missed its rides into the country. But with a garrison of six hundred thousand and a ring of impregnable fortifications, it stood at ease and calmly defied its foes.⁷ All of this was said in a style that

¹ *Judy*, Oct. 26, 1870; see also *Chamber's Journal*, March 4, 1871, pp. 129 et seq.

² *Spectator*, Oct. 22, 1870.

³ *Examiner and London Review*, Oct. 15, 1870.

⁴ *Record*, Sept. 30, 1870.

⁵ *Spectator*, Oct. 8, 1870.

⁶ *Illustrated London News*, Oct. 15, 1870.

⁷ *Examiner and London Review*, Oct. 15, 1870.

seemed to many of the English bombastic,—even “mendaciously rhapsodic.”¹ “If he (Gambetta) carried the newly published document in the car of his balloon,” said the *Telegraph*, “he could have wanted little other ballast. It is heavy with doom, loaded with forthcoming miseries and madness—a burden of passionate pride and national impenitence.”² The *Court Journal*, though somewhat sarcastic, was more tolerant. “We ought,” it said, “to proclaim all honor to inflation, at the moment when the Government itself is borne through the air, and drops from the clouds, carpet bag in hand, laden with its own messages, and transporting its own decrees.”³ And the *Manchester Examiner* conceded that brave words and great deeds might sometimes go together and that for the French, at least, fine phrases were one of the necessities of life.⁴

Almost at the same time that the news of Gambetta’s sensational flight reached England, it was learned that Garibaldi had come to France. Indeed, the *Dublin Review* needed to juggle its dates only a little to declare that the one had descended from his balloon to embrace the other.⁵ There was practical unanimity in England in declaring that the presence of the valiant old Italian was not of advantage. By the majority, his appearance was regarded as distinctly unfortunate. It would deepen the tint of the Republic that already seemed alarmingly red to many who wished to be its friends. The *Guardian* spoke of his

¹ *The Interests of Europe in the Conditions of Peace* (pamphlet, London, 1870); see also *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1870; *Terms of Peace*, pp. 540 *et seq.*

² *Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 11, 1870.

³ *Court Journal*, Oct. 29, 1870.

⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 12, 1870.

⁵ *Dublin Review*, Oct. 1, 1870, *The Fall of the Empire*, vol. xv, pp. 479 *et seq.*

utter lack of political stability, and of the ease with which he might be used by men of extreme opinions.¹ The *News* believed his championship of the new government would cause dissension in those classes from which it needed financial and military support.² His desire to secure Alsace and Lorraine for the one-time enemy, who had wrested from Italy Nice, and Savoy was declared by the sober-minded *Saunders'* as utterly quixotic or, what was the same, Garibaldian.³ From the standpoint of the influential class in England, it would have been better had the French thanked the noble old chieftain for his goodwill and then conducted him civilly to the frontier and seen him safely aboard a ship bound for Caprera. He brought a great heart, said the *Times*, but what France needed was a head,—the ability to organize her shattered resources, the sagacity that would win confidence in her good intentions for the future,—not only among her own people but abroad.⁴ The old Commander, with the magic of his fame, the magnetism that reduced his followers almost to the frenzy of idolaters, disturbed pacific England. He was an idealist, and idealists could do such shocking things.

But if the perfervid tone of Gambetta's eloquence⁵ and the colour of the shirt that covered the brawny shoulders of Garibaldi alienated some Britons who had sympathies with the French, they further inflamed the zeal of those workingmen who had already espoused the cause of the Republic. Already these were demanding that Parliament be assembled that it might teach the Ministry its duty in recognizing the new Government, and in rebuking Prussia

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 11, Nov. 7, 1870.

² *Daily News*, Oct. 14, 1870.

³ *Saunders'*, Oct. 13, 1870.

⁴ *Times*, Oct. 11, 1870.

⁵ His General Order was called in England "Garibaldi's Hymn".

for the greed she wished to gratify in Alsace and Lorraine.¹ The conservative *Standard* regretted that many of all classes of English society were deterred from taking part in the agitation for mediation, because if they did take part they would be expected, too, to shout for the French Republic and do such undignified things as carry torches and wait on the Prime Minister with representations as to his foreign policy.² The Tories, who, to some extent, had sympathized with France before the fall of the Imperial Government, had small sympathy with their new associates, the Comtists. They resented the attempt to identify her cause with republicanism, solidarity, and the brotherhood of man. They believed the French themselves were not very proud of the kinship the Leather Lane republicans claimed for them with their "cousins—German."³ There was a torch-light demonstration of about six hundred of these Democrats in Palace Yard, a few days after Garibaldi had been invested with his French command. Their resolutions were more than usually ardent, and found little response among the absent Conservatives. Gladstone was to be instructed to recognize Republican France and to protest against its dismemberment; he was urged to call a special meeting of Parliament, so that if Germany persisted in her harsh demands, Great Britain could be empowered to take up arms in opposition.⁴ The *Economist* was sure that, had the working class attributed any practical importance to this or the other meetings, it would have seen to it that the minority that opposed the resolutions would have been swelled to a majority. The stay-at-homes had

¹ *Times*, Oct. 5, 1870.

² *Standard*, Oct. 13, 1870.

³ *Judy*, Oct. 26, 1870; *Times*, Oct. 24, 1870.

⁴ *Times*, Oct. 20, 1870; *Illustrated London News*, Oct. 22, 1870.

felt assured that the middle class was, for the most part, in favour of caution and could be trusted to counter-balance the turbulent wishes of their brothers.¹ England possessed a very fine navy, but it was believed that the men whose taxes supported it were too practical to attempt to send it to the relief of Paris.

Among the Irish, of course, it was not expected that considerations of common sense would prevail. The *Tablet* thundered that the new Government was composed of the disciples of Voltaire;² but in October, Lecky wrote that Irishmen were still as passionately French as they had been in the days of the Catholic Empire. The country people, he said, stopped him in the road to ask for news of the war, and carmen and guides overwhelmed the hapless tourist with political discussion.³

The Corporation of Dublin exceeded its functions by calling for Her Majesty's Government and those of the other Neutral Powers to intervene for peace.⁴ A dealer in the Strand made much money from a caricature map which showed England quaking with fear and rage, and holding by a string Ireland, who, as a little dog, was very eager to get loose and fight.⁵ No one was surprised when in the middle of October, an Irish Ambulance Corps left Dublin to sail to Havre. The *Times* was fearful that these strong, young Irishmen had left for a more dangerous purpose than they avowed, and urged the Home Secretary to take measures against the violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act.⁶

¹ *Economist*, Oct. 22, 1870, *The Middle and the Working Classes in the War*, vol. xxviii, pp. 1283 *et seq.*

² Nov. 26, 1870.

³ El. Lecky, *Memoirs of W. E. H. Lecky*, p. 87.

⁴ *Saunders'*, Oct. 25, 1870.

⁵ *Art Journal*, Oct., 1870, pp. 322-323.

⁶ Issues of Oct. 11, 15, 1870.

Von Bernstorff was still showing an amazing facility at peppering the Government with remonstrances on the exportation of coal and munitions of war. According to an English M. P., in Havre when the contingent arrived, the seventy Irishmen were told that they were expected to join the French Army. Fifty, he said, went on to do so, and the rest applied to the English consulate to be sent home.¹ The Irish *Nation's* account of the expedition was very different. Two hundred and fifty, instead of seventy, went to Havre, it recorded, and since only forty could be used as hospital attendants, a hundred and fifty of the number decided to join the Foreign Legion. The others returned to Dover.² The Compagnie Irlandaise was allowed to fight as a unit under its own flag, that had been quartered with the tricolour. It gave a good account of itself and remained to hear the last shot fired by the Foreign Legion. But the admonition of the *Times* was heeded, and the Foreign Enlistment Act thereafter so carefully enforced that no further such companies of men on mercy bent were allowed to leave the Empire.³

The ill luck of the Irish in attaching themselves to a lost cause was signally emphasized by the astounding news of the surrender of Metz that followed hard on their arrival. It gave the month its climax. Marshal Bazaine, after a siege of only seventy days, gave up the fortress that France had proudly called, "*La Pucelle*." It was only very gradually the English came to know the story that lay behind the Marshal's surrender. Until they did, the denunciations of Gambetta seemed bombastic rhodomontade to be as utterly discredited as the usual accusations of unfairness shrilled

¹ Letter to *Times*, Oct. 15, 1870.

² *Irish Nation*, Oct. 22, 1870.

³ Duquet, *Ireland and France*, *passim*; see also *Report of Irish Ambulance Corps for 1870* (Dublin, 1871).

out by a poor loser.¹ It was realized that the surrender was most timely for the Germans. For, if the six corps of the army surrounding the city could have been detained some weeks longer, great things might have been expected of General Aurelles de Paradin, who had taken command of the Army of the Loire,—much to its advantage,—and of General Keratry, who was forming an army in Brittany.²

We must take some liberty with the sequence of disclosures, if we are to follow the sequence of the events that made up the ugly episode. Early in the month, the newspapers noticed as relatively unimportant the Emperor's publication of a manifesto from Wilhelmshöhe. It was an attempt to free himself from the charge of having precipitated the disastrous war. The English saw its chief significance in the fact that Bismarck had permitted its appearance.³ It was a straw worth noting, especially since the semi-official journals were claiming that he had not wholly given up the Bonapartist dynasty.¹ The *Spectator* believed that the superfluous discourtesy with which he had branded as "totally without foundation" a report made by Dr. Russell of the ex-Emperor's Sedan interview with the King, was due to an attempt to screen the Imperial captive from the hostile criticism to be expected from an exposition of his ignorance of the military situation at that battle.⁵ If these straws showed the way the wind blew, it was thought Prussia was eager to checkmate the Republic and reestablish the dynasty.

¹ *Daily News*, Oct. 31, 1870; see also *Memoir of Edward Blount*, diary entry for Nov. 17, 1870; *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 31, 1870; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 2, 1870.

² *Saturday Review*, Dec. 17, 1870.

³ *Daily News*, Oct. 4, 1870.

⁴ W. H. D. Adams, *The Franco-Prussian War* (London, 1872), vol. ii, p. 37.

⁵ *Spectator*, Oct. 8, 1870.

On October the eighth, the London papers commented on the visit to Chislehurst of General Bourbaki, brother of Mme. Le Breton, the Empress' friend and attendant. They very naturally drew the conclusion that General Bazaine, who had permitted his subaltern to make the journey from Metz, must still consider himself to be fighting for the Regent, and that Bismarck, in granting passports to the visitor, showed that he hoped for good things from the interview.¹ A little later the go-between in the negotiations came in for much editorial comment. He was a certain M. Regnier, an obscure Frenchman, who baffled attempts at deciding whether he was a clever but inconsiderable busy-body or a very shrewd agent of the Prussian government. Whatever his character, he had certainly done his part in serving Prussia's purpose. On a visit to Hastings he had obtained an interview with the Empress, and by a bit of strategy, an autographed message from the Prince Imperial to his father. By means of a passport from the Prussian Embassy he carried this to Ferrières, while Bismarck was negotiating with Favre. Needless to say, he greatly embarrassed the attempts of the Provisional government by affording the Prussian a threat in the form of an alternative Imperial negotiation. On the termination of the Ferrières interviews, he carried his autograph to Metz as proof of his claim that he was a messenger from the Empress, who wished to communicate with its commander. Bazaine forthwith sent General Bourbaki to Chislehurst, and M. Regnier returned to Bismarck to tell him that Bazaine had declared his willingness to capitulate, on condition that he be allowed to march to France and there proclaim the Regency. For this he was willing to sign a peace ceding Alsace and Lorraine. Bourbaki, however,

¹ *Graphic; Daily Telegraph.*

on his arrival before Eugénie, found that she did not approve the intrigue and was absolutely opposed to signing away French territory. There was nothing for the General to do but return and admit to his superior that the mission was founded on a deception. The *Spectator* believed that, had the Empress acceded to the terms offered through Bourbaki, her son would have been carried to Metz and proclaimed Emperor. But though letters passed between Eugénie and King William, and she granted von Bernstorff an interview, and even availed herself of permission briefly to visit Napoleon at Wilhelmshöhe, it must be said to her credit that not even the future of her son tempted her to become Count Bismarck's puppet.¹

On October the nineteenth, the editor of the *Times* wrote in a private letter that there were rumours of peace that the Belgians swore were well founded. No one could find reason for them, but the Belgian Minister went so far as to maintain that a treaty was practically signed.² On this day, too, Lord Granville telegraphed to Lyons news of intelligence sent him from Brussels that a treaty had been signed between the Prussians and Marshal Bazaine. Lord Lyons replied that the Provisional Government had no knowledge of such a treaty, but that it had known for some time that the Marshal was communicating with the enemy and suspected that he negotiated on the basis of a Bonapartist restoration. The last telegram received by them, however, indicated that Bazaine had changed his aim and was dicker-ing for his own establishment as dictator.³ The day that Lyons sent this information to his chief, the *Times* published a story by a correspondent at Wilhelmshöhe, who had been

¹ *Spectator*, Oct. 15, Nov. 12, 1870; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 11, 1870.

² Dasent, *John Delane*, vol. ii, pp. 271-272.

³ Lyons to Granville, Oct. 20, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 168-169.

told by a commissioner from Alsace that the Prussians had offered the Marshal permission to leave Metz with his army and go wherever he pleased, while they held Alsace and Lorraine. On the twenty-second it was reported by the *Graphic* that Bazaine already had sent his aide-de-camp to Prussian headquarters at Versailles to negotiate directly. According to the *Court Journal*, Bazaine's wife herself went with the company on the express condition that she be allowed an interview with the King. She was described as a lady with eyes "black as night"—"eyes that could look behind her." But the all-seeing emissary and her escorts, it appears, did not arrive until after her husband had surrendered.¹

Meantime, General Boyer had come to Chislehurst from Metz on the twenty-second, and had departed empty-handed, as had others before him.² On the twenty-sixth the Empress authorized a statement that she was furthering no intrigues for peace or for an armistice.³ Bazaine's capitulation, the day after, went even further to make the British regard the Empress' residence as a retreat rather than a centre for political intrigue.

It was found that the Marshal had surrendered without stipulating for any conditions favorable to the dynasty; but that he had, nevertheless, worked traitorously against the Republic was not believed until the narrative of G. T. Rob-

¹ *Court Journal*, Nov. 5, 1870.

² *Daily News*, Oct. 26, 1870. *Revue Historique* (March-April, 1918) prints the text of a letter which the Empress addressed to King William in Oct., 1870. The reply was received on the 26th and proved unacceptable. See also Fleury, *Memoirs of Empress Eugénie*, vol. ii, pp. 549-560, for an account of the fruitless mission for the Empress undertaken by the son of Théophile Gautier. Young Gautier arrived at Versailles, Oct. 23. Bismarck refused the terms the Empress offered, declaring he must have Alsace and Lorraine; see also *Bernstorff Papers*, vol. iii, chap. xx; Dr. Evans, *The Second Empire*, pp. 31 *et seq.*

³ *Daily News*, Oct. 26, 1870.

inson appeared some time later. This correspondent of the *Guardian*, due to his presence within the fortress, had enjoyed exceptional advantages for observation, and his revelations were not to Bazaine's credit. The Marshal's own report, published in England in December, was disappointing even to those inclined to think him honest. It was described as eminently dry, official, and unsatisfactory,¹—minus a single word that might have revealed heroism. The men, said Robinson, had fought splendidly in the sortie of August the thirty-first, and might have followed up their success and raised the siege under another commander.² Even at later times, they could have cut their way through the besiegers, but they were weakened by the fear that they would be sold for a price, that the Empress, or her son, was to be brought to Metz to make peace. They knew Bourbaki had gone to her, and Boyer. They were told the Germans occupied Normandy and Picardy; that Brittany was in revolt for a restoration; that the Reds were murdering and plundering in all the great cities of France; that Italy was on the point of declaring war to recover Savoy and Nice. It was said, the garrison had been won to a surrender, believing food was exhausted, when, in reality, there remained enough to provision it for months.³ Robinson drew a horrible picture of the French Commander dawdling over his late breakfasts in the villa he dared not leave for fear of assassination. There he took time from his pleasures to suppress the city's papers and replace them by official sheets that painted all things black. There he

¹ *Saturday Review*, Dec. 31, 1870.

² Cf. C. Allanson Winn, *What I Saw of the War*; Archibald Forbes, *My Experiences of the War between France and Germany*, pp. 294-298.

³ *Dublin University Magazine*, Dec., 1870, *French Defeats and French Victories*, pp. 648 *et seq.*; G. T. Robinson, *The Fall of Metz*, pp. 380-453.

busied himself with promoting pretty men who sat their horses well in the Imperial Guard, utterly ignoring the engineers and artillerymen, who were not pretty and were Republicans. From the villa there went forth mysterious messengers charged with letters for Versailles or Chislehurst, but there never came an order for a sortie or a message for the sick and wounded in the hospitals. Men refused the Marshal his title and spoke of him simply as M'sieu.¹ He seemed a great, black spider,—stupid and malevolent. No one in Metz was surprised that on his way to Germany he was attacked by the mob and only saved by his Prussian escort.²

¹ *Spectator*, Nov. 5, 1870.

CHAPTER XI

A MOON OF TREATIES AND AN ECLIPSE

IN October the *Examiner* imagined Mr. Moneybags or Sir Empty Pate as exclaiming: "Would you have us go to war? or threaten to do so? or call out the militia? or recall Lord Augustus Loftus from Berlin?" whereupon he would express his own opinion of what should be done by taking a pompous pinch of snuff, refilling his emptied glass, and otherwise ministering to his own comfort.¹ But those who wished to follow this discreet example must have had to do so amidst a clamour of suggestion and remonstrance from all sides. For the issues of the war were becoming daily more distinct and increasingly challenged comment.

October was the month that completed the transference of the war from the guidance of the Marshals of the Empire to the new leaders of the Republic. In that month it became clear that France was determined to fight on, though with no other gain in alliance than the old Garibaldi and some score of irresponsible young Irishmen,—that her object was to preserve the integrity of her territory against the aggression of a nation that had seemed essentially moderate and pacific, but was submitting itself now to a leadership that was brutal and predatory. England could not yet determine, it is true, whether France was tinting herself a Belleville red or only a constitutional pink, or whether the new government was to have a life long enough to make its particular shade a matter of importance. She was eager that France gain peace that she might put her

¹ *Examiner and London Review*, Oct. 7, 1870.

house in order,—a just peace that would not cause such destruction as would make necessary an entire rebuilding. France had braved the hurricane and a certain amount of chastening was desirable, but England was very eager for a just determining of the amount. Parlor strategists gave way to arm-chair diplomats. The movements of von Moltke were neglected. Treaty making became the vogue. The officials of the government were bombarded with paper pellets of suggestion, and erected a wordy system of defence behind which they could continue their amicable letter carrying.

It was recognized that the great stumbling block to peace was the difficulty involving Alsace and Lorraine, and the British occupied themselves steadily with its solution. There were those who believed, with *Punch*, that France should be allowed to keep her provinces if only she would signify her new righteousness by restoring Nice and Savoy to Italy.¹ Others, like the *Graphic*, wishing to make her renunciation still more retroactive, advised that she restore not only the Italian districts but the once German Alsace and Lorraine.² Moral advice to either belligerent on the subject of annexations seemed to a number of Englishmen somewhat pharisaical on the part of a nation that had forcibly annexed more territory than all the nations of Europe. A former colonial governor wrote the *Times* that his countrymen should remember the parable of the beam and the mote.³ There were advocates of the *Telegraph's* compromise plan of erecting the disputed provinces into an independent neutralized state under a guarantee of the Powers.⁴ John Stuart Mill would have had the guarantee

¹ *Punch*, Oct. 29, 1870.

² *Graphic*, Oct. 15.

³ F. B. Head, letter to *Times*, Oct. 26, 1870.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 23, 1870.

last for a definite period,—say fifty years,—after which the provinces should be given the power to annex themselves to whichever claimant they favored.¹ Lloyd Lindsay, on a visit to Versailles, discussed the matter with Count Bismarck and found the Chancellor willing to approve such a plan with certain important stipulations. The provinces he would have constituted a kind of neutral colony under German protection with their fortresses garrisoned by German troops. He felt quite strong enough to insist on this and to reject immediately Lloyd Lindsay's alternative that the fortifications be razed to the ground.² The *Economist* was impatient of the plan in any form:

Of all things most dangerous are engagements at once important and indefinite, and guarantees are both *par excellence*. . . . Either they mean much, and then are important contracts which may bring us into trouble hereafter; or they mean nothing, and then no one will ask for them, and they won't be given.³

A guaranteed Alsace-Lorraine would be a district that assuredly could be expected to put the two definitions to a test.

Another compromise measure which found British advocates was that of yielding Prussia only part of her demand. Sir Robert Morier and a certain writer for *Fraser's* claimed to find in Alsace a friendly disposition toward the invading army that they believed in the event of annexation could be fostered into a real patriotism for the new Germany.⁴ The *News* suspected that Bismarck, in asking for Metz, was only advancing an exorbitant demand with the

¹ Mill to Sir Chas. Dilke, Sept. 30, 1870, *Letters of J. S. Mill*, vol. ii, pp. 273-274.

² Harriet S. Wantage, *Lord Wantage, a Memoir*, pp. 194-198.

³ *Economist*, Oct. 22, 1870.

⁴ *Memoirs of Sir Robt. Morier*, vol. ii, pp. 204-205; *A Month with the Belligerents*, *Fraser's Magazine*, Oct., 1870; pp. 483 *et seq.*

idea of manipulating public opinion to a more ready acquiescence in the real ones. A member of Parliament, in a pamphlet on *The Interest of Europe in the Conditions of Peace*, was willing to deal so generously with Prussia as to grant a financial indemnity together with Alsace and as much of Lorraine as would include Metz. He obligingly outlined four other alternatives which would still safeguard the interests of Europe, should his main proposals prove unacceptable.²

This laboured scheme of the Honorable Member, like many others propounded at this time, was ingenious but confusing. Ruskin attempted to simplify the affair by translating it into narrow and homely conditions. "Suppose," he said,

that Lancashire, having absorbed Cumberland and Cheshire, and been much insulted and troubled by Yorkshire in consequence, and at last attacked, and having victoriously repulsed the attack, and retaining old grudges against Yorkshire, about the color of roses from the fifteenth century, declares that it cannot be possibly safe against the attacks of Yorkshire any longer until it gets the township of Giggleswick and Wigglesworth, and a fortress on the Pen-y-gent. Yorkshire replying this is totally inadmissible, and that it will eat its last horse and perish its last Yorkshire man, rather than part with a stone of Giggleswick, a crag of Pen-y-gent, or a ripple of Ribble,—Lancashire with its Cumbrian and Cheshire contingents invades Yorkshire, and meeting with much Divine assistance, ravages the West Riding, and besieges York on Christmas day.³

On this analysis, he had no patience with the Prussian claim of a need for defence, and believed she was pressing her victory too far, dangerously far. He would have had

¹ *Daily News*, Oct. 8, 1870.

² *Op. cit.* (London, 1870), *passim*.

³ John Ruskin, *Complete Works* (edited by Cook and Wedderburn, London, 1903-1912), vol. xxvii, pp. 22-23.

England help France, but just how he failed to say. And the fact that he organized an association to combat the efforts of the Anglo-French Intervention Committee makes it difficult to see by what means he expected to secure for France the integrity he so humorously defended.¹ The *Globe*, disagreeing with his views, dismissed one of his letters to the *Telegraph* very brusquely. If, it said, Mr. Ruskin was ashamed to speak as an Englishman, as he professed, he should carry his modesty a little further and feel ashamed to write. A number of simple, honest people, it believed, would be driven by this letter to speculating as to whether he "was a very wise man or a—something else very widely different."²

Ruskin's equivocal position was that of many others whose determination that Prussia should not acquire French territory, was only equalled by their vagueness as to what means should be used to restrain her. The member for Derby won the applause of his constituents when he declared himself certain that there would never be peace in Europe or peaceful relations between Prussia and France so long as the Prussians were in possession of French territory.³ Another member, speaking in Greenock, declared it a matter of European interest that no unwilling population be handed over to rulers whom they were not disposed to obey.⁴ Mr. Vernon Harcourt, not only in speeches to his constituents at Oxford, but in the much discussed letters to the *Times* which he signed "Historicus," urged the inherent danger of the Prussian demands. Another very able controversialist, who wrote under the name of "Scrutator," declared that a peace concluded on the threatened territorial

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. xxxiv, p. 502; *Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 7, 1870.

² *Globe and Traveller*, Oct. 10, 1870.

³ Mr. Bass at Bouverie St. meeting, *Spectator*, Oct. 8, 1870.

⁴ Austin Bruce, *Spectator*, Oct. 1, 1870.

cession would be no more than a truce which would keep all Europe in a state of armed preparation for the renewal of the conflict.¹ There were times when Dasent and Delane let slip, somehow, the control of their great daily, and some under-editor, Thomas Chenery, perhaps, invested its very leaders with sentiments as favorable to France as those of *Pall Mall* and the *Standard*.² On October the twenty-first there appeared a stinging rebuke to the great nation that seemed "bent on offering up respect for the liberty of others and care for its own freedom on the altar of military preeminence." The length of the tether that was allowed the paper when it was under its own proper guidance was a proposal that England join with Russia and Austria in advocating the destruction of the strong places of Alsace and Lorraine, and undertake with them to ally itself with either France or Germany in case one of the two should declare war without submitting its grievance to their arbitration. The proposal won little favor in England. That nation was reluctant to undertake engagements for the future and very frank in pointing out how little her past performance made such engagements worth. Forcible intervention, the proposal of terms by the Neutrals, their determination by a Congress, diplomatic protest, or a simple facilitation of negotiations,—all were discussed and had their adherents.

No suggestion aroused such a torrent of comment as an anonymous article that appeared toward the latter part of the month, tucked away in the last pages of the *Edinburgh*. It was very soon recognized as an unofficial utterance of the Prime Minister himself, and so it attracted such attention that the spectacle was afforded of a quarterly run-

¹ *Times*. Oct. 18, 1870; see also "*Scrutator's*" letter to *Times*, Oct. 27, 1870.

² Dasent, *John Delane*, vol. ii, p. 270.

ning into a second edition. From a persual of this article, which was entitled *Germany, France and England*, it appears that Gladstone's idea of the duties of neutrality was to administer equal doses of criticism to both belligerents, to appropriate much soothing syrup of self-congratulation for his own country, and to comfort the world with the assurance that all would be well in the future when public right should come into its own. There was a review of the policy of France and Germany directly preceding the war, based not on the British Blue Book, but merely on popular opinion,—so prejudiced was it against the cause of France. There was criticism of the German military system as being unduly burdensome and founded on the principle of compulsion. There was a gibe at King William's piety, an expression of doubt as to the beneficence of Germany's possession of power; and a stern condemnation of the declared intention of wrenching a million and a quarter of people from the country to which they had belonged for years.¹ It ended, as the *Saturday Review* observed, with

one of those high-falutin descriptions of the moral greatness and superiority of England, and of her right to sermonize the world, which are so provoking to foreigners, and act so injuriously on ourselves.² Safe behind its thread of silver sea, England is to exhort all men to do as she does, and to be like her, perfectly just, perfectly moderate, and perfectly impartial. We have, it seems, been placed by Providence in a position very like that of a clergyman; for just as he may say what he likes without fear of hissing or reply, so we may say what we like without fear of any one crossing the Channel.³

If this principle were accepted, the reviewer could not re-

¹ *Germany, France and England*, *Edinburgh Review*, Oct., 1870, vol. cxxxii, p. 554.

² *Saturday Review*, Nov. 12, 1870.

sist speculating on what sermons the Americans might preach, with the breadth of the Atlantic between them and those they were bent on improving.

It was Gladstone's phrase of "Happy England," and the "streak of silver sea" which was her surety that most stuck in the craw of Englishmen. *Judy*, taking it for text wrote:

"Calmly we view the riot and commotion
Wrapp'd in our happy insularity;
'Tis true, we once swore friendship and devotion,
But, Heav'n be thank'd! between us lies the ocean,
And the protective barrier of Neutrality."¹

Sir Edward Sullivan, reviewing the article in a pamphlet which he entitled *Happy England*, declared that far from being in a fortunate condition, England was disliked, envied, looked upon as a scold, an acid-and-water Pharisee. As for the happy isolation, the matter of her being without allies far outweighed the beneficent Providence which had dowered her with a "streak of silver sea."²

There was measured praise for Gladstone's performance in *Pall Mall*, the *Echo*, and the *Spectator*,³ but the general verdict condemned such a departure from ministerial dignity and reserve as the contribution of an anonymous and frankly spoken article at a time when the hope for mediation should have imposed silence. Of all the indiscreet and injudicious actions of Mr. Gladstone, this one was characterized by the *Record* as being the most injudicious and indiscreet.⁴ Certainly, to speak of the late Imperial Government as insane, profligate, and lying; of the Court as having created a close and foul atmosphere which tainted the conscience of the world; and to speak of Prus-

¹ *Judy*, Oct. 26, 1870.

² Cf. review of *Happy England*, *John Bull*, Feb. 11, 1871.

³ Issues of Oct. 19, Nov. 7, and Nov. 5, respectively.

⁴ *Record*, Nov. 9, 1870.

sian statesmanship as brutal and unscrupulous; and the scheme for annexation as pillage, was hardly a happy prelude for the urging of friendly offices.

It is not surprising that the combination of such candour with a style that recalled the copy books of Eton induced several critics to disbelieve the rumour of Gladstone's authorship. Even that great man must have been somewhat nonplussed at hearing the *Scotsman* say:

If Mr. Gladstone could have been capable of such an indiscretion, he certainly would not, unless he had undergone some softening of the brain since the end of the session, have executed the mistake weakly and clumsily. . . . It is obviously the production of a young man, and a very young writer, whose sins, whatever may happen, should not be visited upon . . . a father whose name is so illustrious, and whose responsibilities are so solemn.¹

Except for the prestige of the anonymous writer the *Edinburgh* had added to its lists, it was admitted that the case for France was better set forth in the *Quarterly*.² It expounded the righteousness of sympathy with France, but a sympathy that kept its hands folded. At the same time it seasoned its arguments with outspoken rebuke of the supineness of Governmental policy and the low state of the Kingdom's military equipment. "In the course of the last ten years," said one of its contributors, "we have practised an ostentatious and verbose neutrality throughout three great wars and one small war. The result is that there is no people in Christendom which does not despise or detest us."³

The great middle class in England had not been dissatisfied with the policy during that time, and this class was

¹ *Scotsman*, Nov. 7, 1870.

² *The War between France and Germany*, *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1870, pp. 293 *et seq.*

³ *The Terms of Peace*, *ibid.*, Oct., 1870, pp. 540 *et seq.*

now somewhat suspicious that the *Quarterly*, the Opposition's organ, was urging the extremity of France for the purpose of effecting a general change rather than an exceptional deviation. They disliked the *Quarterly's* insistence on the necessity of increasing the army and navy. David Urquhart in his *Diplomatic Review* was arguing that the "desolation of Christendom" was caused by the loss of politeness, and that if a betterment could be effected in the method of rearing children, and in the forms of salutation and cleanliness, a surer basis would be established for religious and moral discipline.¹ Not many Englishmen followed him in all his fine philosophizing, but they disliked increase of armament as much as he did. They were glad to believe he was guilty of a fallacy when he declared, "In England both the people and the Government are engaged in schemes, not for the defence of the country, but for the increase of its nominal defenders, so that they may become worthy of butchery."

Those Ministers who made bold to speak their opinions officially, unfailingly took their cue from the September speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that had favoured only a willingness for mediation, and not from the article in the *Edinburgh*. They advised that England keep its conscience in its breeches' pocket and preserve its tender sentiments under a glass dome of neutrality so that they might not be subjected to the contact of a Prussian rebuff.²

From France there came the plan of Guizot that neutral nations assign the reasonable limits of Prussian claims and French resistance, and establish the principle of a great European arbitration in the duels of nations.³ It was a call to high endeavour and many grieved that it should go

¹ *Diplomatic Review*, Oct. 12, 1870, pp. 14 *et seq.*

² *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 22, 1870.

³ *Times*, Oct. 26, 1870.

unanswered. Came also an appeal from the philanthropist and great silk merchant of Lyons, Arlès Dufour, President of the International and Permanent League for Peace, who for forty years by precept and example had striven to knit close the ties of friendship between his country and Great Britain, and to further concord among all nations. He asked that England use her powerful voice to enlighten Europe on the character the war had latterly assumed, and do for France in her hour of trial those offices he would have urged on his own country, had her neighbour suffered disaster.¹

While the British were thus indulging themselves in an orgy of unofficial treaty-making and criticism, which was having no effect on the conduct of the two belligerents, the Government was still laboring constantly, if half-heartedly, in an effort to bring the two principals themselves to evolve and agree upon peace terms. The British Ministers were aware early in October that General Burnside's volunteer efforts at securing an armistice had failed.² On the sixteenth, Lyons wrote to Granville that the Comte de Chaudordy³ was urging that England use its influence in a direct manner to bring the war to an end on terms which it would be possible for France to accept. He pointed out the serious responsibility incumbent on England as the head of the League of Neutrals, since by its formation France had been prevented from gaining possible allies.⁴ With a consciousness of the justice of the French claims in this regard, Granville wrote to the British Ambassador at St.

¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1870. Cf. *Evening Mail*, Oct. 21; *Examiner*, Oct. 22; *Times*, Oct. 25, 1870.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 19, 1870.

³ Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Provisional Government at Tours.

⁴ *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, p. 145.

Petersburg suggesting that there was reason to believe that France would agree to the razing of the fortifications of Metz and Strasburg (the concession which it will be remembered was being advocated by the *Times*), and asking that Gortchakoff be consulted as to the possibility of an understanding between England and Russia. In the event of a favorable answer, the Ambassador was instructed to inquire whether Russia believed it possible to end the siege of Paris, and whether, jointly with the other Neutrals, she would make simultaneous appeals to the two belligerent governments. Gortchakoff's answer was in no way encouraging. He believed the demands contained in Bismarck's Circular to the Foreign Powers would not be modified by French military success. The disapproval of the Neutrals unless backed by threats of armed intervention would be unavailing. His master was interested as to the English opinion of what terms might be accepted, but saw no hope for any good from their mutual agreement on the matter.¹

Before this answer could be received from far-off Russia, M. Tissot apprized Granville that he had reason to believe that Italy was about to respond favorably to French solicitations for her armed assistance. He asked that England encourage this. The British Foreign Minister replied very properly that it would be impossible for his country to advise another to loose hold of that neutrality which itself was holding to tenaciously.² A Cabinet council called on the twentieth was forced to proceed without a definite knowledge of what terms would be acceptable to France. After the rebuff of Jules Favre and the very definite demands set forth by Bismarck, France thought it would be undignified to suggest anything further. She

¹ *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 146, 170-171.

² Granville to Lyons, Oct. 18, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxxi, p. 155.

was, however, eager that the Neutrals of themselves take action.¹ The result of the meeting was the despatch of telegrams to the British Ambassadors at Tours, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Florence with the object of inducing the belligerents to agree to an armistice for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly.² Russia surprised the British by withholding the desired instructions from her representative in Berlin and by sending, instead, a private letter to King William. Lord Loftus could only hope it contained a recommendation of his government's proposal.³ Italy's response, and that of Austria-Hungary, was favorable. But Italy was still scarce made, and as for Austria, as Princess Metternich remarked to Granville, what aid could she give?—now that she was no more than a Power of the third or fourth rank,—“just as was England.”⁴

Granville's suggestions on the armistice were so timid that they rather seem to justify the lady's estimation of his country's rank. He had abstained from definite proposals and contented himself with directing the attention of the belligerents to the horrors of a bombardment which might be avoided by the convention of a Constituent Assembly. As to the terms of the armistice, he refrained from suggestion. The *Manchester Guardian* was quite mistaken in its assumption that the English proposals were coupled with a statement of what Europe believed would be the conditions of a fair and durable peace. It was quite right in saying that, were this not the case, the Ministry had simply

¹ Lyons to Granville, Oct. 20, 1870, *ibid.*, vol. lxxi, p. 169.

² Karl Abel, *International Relations before and during the War of 1870*, vol. ii, pp. 334-336.

³ Loftus to Granville, Oct. 26, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 189-190; Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. i, p. 354.

⁴ Lady Betty Balfour, *Personal and Literary Letters of Robt., First Earl of Lytton*, vol. i, pp. 258-259.

exchanged "a policy of lamentable feebleness for one of purposeless energy."¹

The representations of the Neutrals availed France nothing. The preference of Russia's for isolated action showed that the League, even in pursuit of a timorous policy, was no real unit. Once more the Government of France invoked the aid of the veteran Thiers, who forthwith set out for Versailles, to urge the armistice. The very fact that negotiations were to be conducted through him and not through the ambassadors of the Neutral League was a Prussian triumph. It showed the practical isolation of France, no matter how true might be her claim of having Europe's sympathy. M. Thiers was regarded, moreover, as the high priest of chauvinism, who had done more than any man in France to create antagonism for Prussia. "When he sues for peace they may almost fancy," said the *Guardian*, "that the vainglorious spirit of his country, which he personifies, has at last been sufficiently chastised."² He was believed to be the opponent of that kind of republicanism for which the Liberals of South Germany and the French followers of Gambetta and Jules Favre had a common sympathy, — a negotiator, then, well pleasing to the Chancellor.

Thiers was very soon made to see that the favour of the meeting was granted to him as the emissary of France alone, and not of France backed by the Neutral Powers. He began the interview on the thirty-first, by speaking of the projected armistice as having been proposed by the Neutrals. Bismarck objected impatiently and arrogantly to considering any suggestion as coming from them. In speaking of England, he showed especial ill humour. The despatch, he said, to which she had rallied support, descanted at great

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 24, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1870.

length on humanity but came to no precise conclusions. To the French envoy, himself, Bismarck was courteous, and during the first half of the five days occupied in negotiations, he appeared somewhat conciliatory. He had at hand no M. Regnier with whom he could pretend to be negotiating; but he did allude to the members of the late régime who were endeavouring to reconstitute their government at Cassel. Thiers showed no alarm. He declared the Second Empire was dead beyond the power of revival. On the second of November, the question was reached of the revictualling of Paris during the period of the armistice. Count Bismarck raised no fundamental objections, but decided to postpone further discussion until the following day, when he would have consulted with the staff.¹

The famous Dr. Russell, in a conversation before the interviews, had warned Thiers that the Prussian Military Cabinet would not entertain his proposal for a moment; Russell himself refused to "recommend" it in the *Times*. Whether or not his judgment was correct and Thiers was arguing against a foregone conclusion cannot be known; for before negotiations were resumed an event took place which may have diverted Bismarck from his intentions. News reached Versailles of a revolutionary insurrection in Paris. Though this was quickly followed by assurances that the movement was under control, a renewal of the negotiations found Bismarck firmly opposed to the capital's revictualling. After some further parley, Thiers departed.³

This disastrous episode of the thirty-first of October convinced Bismarck that Paris was a city divided against itself,—one that could be expected speedily to capitulate. It

¹ Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 65; *Memoirs of M. Thiers, 1870-1875*, p. 73.

² Atkins, *Life of Sir W. H. Russell*, vol. ii, p. 224.

³ Thiers to Lyons, Nov. 10, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, p. 221.

showed him, too, that though the old Orleanist diplomat with whom he was negotiating might be to him *persona grata*, he was distrusted by a very effective minority of Parisians. It was extremely improbable that any moderate terms which he might sponsor would be accepted. The pretext for the discontent of Belleville and its leaders was that the Government, in accepting the offices of Thiers, had embraced a policy of moderation which directly contradicted the wishes of the capital. The city had been stung to the quick by the surrender of Bazaine. The National Guard, by its loyalty and efficiency in suppressing the insurrection, made it possible for the Government to substitute an appeal to universal suffrage for the decision of triumphant insurgents as to whether or not its actions had been arbitrary. The vote, taken November the third, approved its efforts to obtain peace; but only on the understanding that it adhere to the principles originally set forth by Favre. However, as we have seen, the negotiations on which they balloted were already known by Thiers to be hopeless. In reporting his lack of success, he concluded by saying, "The time has now come for the Neutral Powers to judge if sufficient attention has been paid to their advice, but it is not us they can reproach with having disregarded it, and we make them judges of the conduct of both belligerent Powers."¹

The net result of the negotiations was the conviction that, unless the Neutrals strengthened their policy, Paris must either surrender or try Bismarck's alternative of "stewing in its own juice."

¹ *Annual Register* for 1870, vol. cxii, pp. 205-206. Accounts of the uprising of Oct. 31st occur in *Spectator*, Nov. 5, and *Manchester Examiner*, Nov. 9, 1870.

CHAPTER XII

A STROKE FROM THE BEAR

"I am no worshipper of Gladstone's, and I think he has shown himself eminently 'parochial' all through the war; but Granville has, I believe, done all that could be done with any safety . . . I think it was we who principally egged him into proposing the armistice." So wrote Delane in a private letter of November the ninth.¹ The *Times*, therefore, felt it incumbent to comfort the Ministry with the assurance that, though the October negotiations had failed, their own efforts in regard to them had, at least, served to soothe the uneasy feelings of the British. Were any one to be blamed in the matter, it showed an inclination to blame Thiers, who was a "charming old man" and a "delightful *càuseur*," but whose circle of ideas was no longer elastic, and who, above all others, had been the original cause of the war. The *Telegraph* pointed out that France had technically placed herself in the wrong by breaking off the negotiations after Bismarck's refusal to permit a revictualling of Paris. By this she had for the time being forfeited the right to expect Britain's good offices.² Some there were who professed satisfaction with the failure, believing that an armistice might have delayed rather than hastened peace.³

¹ Dasent, *John Delane*, vol. ii, p. 273.

² *Times*, Nov. 8, 7, 3, 1870.

³ *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 9, 1870.

⁴ J. M. Ludlow, *Europe and the War*, *Contemporary Review*, Nov., 1870, pp. 649 *et seq.*

No such palliation or resignation was to be found in the *Standard*. It declared Granville had played a poor "if not a contemptible part," in urging the delegation at Tours to persuade the Paris Government to negotiate on terms left solely to the discretion of Bismarck.¹

The despatches of the belligerents induced little change in the British mind. Each imputed bad faith to the other. Those who took their opinions from the *Times* believed that Bismarck was justified in refusing the unsuspected demand for the revictualling of the capital. Those who quoted the *Standard* commended the French for insisting on a demand that Bismarck had been given to understand would be at the very foundation of the armistice. They said the Chancellor had prolonged the interviews only to gain time to complete his siege operations.² They believed that when he set himself seriously to negotiate it would be with a Bonapartist, and not the half-Orleanist, half-Republican Thiers.³ It was remarked as significant that he had allowed the generals captured at Metz to visit the Emperor at Wilhelmshöhe. Bazaine had installed himself at Cassel, where there was already a nest of intriguing Imperialists.⁴ General Changarnier, who alone of the exiles could have rallied a strong party in France, was in Brussels where he was urged both by Prussia and the Imperialists to lend himself to their schemes.⁵ Early in November there appeared a defence of the Emperor, written, ostensibly, by an officer of his staff. Not even the anonymous article by which Gladstone had sought to justify his foreign policy roused such a chorus of disapproval as did this. It was pro-

¹ *Standard*, Nov. 2, 1870.

² *Saunders'*, Nov. 8, 1870.

³ *Weekly Scotsman*, Nov. 5, 1870.

⁴ *Saturday Review*, Nov. 26, 1870.

⁵ Fleury, *Memoirs of Empress Eugénie*, vol. ii, pp. 337-361.

nounced by the *Advertiser* to be "futile and most ineffectual," and was derided by the *Spectator* as a "marvellous admission of intellectual incompetence."¹ It rallied no support for the Emperor, but it deepened the distrust for Bismarck, who was believed to have permitted its publication for his own ends.

Lord Lyons noted as a further cause for Germany's loss of sympathy at this time, the increase and violence of Prussian press attacks on England.² They prevented the Crown Prince at Versailles from being "as jolly as usual;" for he would have liked it understood in England that they were not at all officially encouraged.³ But whether "inspired" or no, Prussian criticism was to be taken account of when it came not only from newspaper writers but from her most eminent men. Von Sybel made it a ground of complaint that the British had presumed to condemn the reunion to their fatherland of two stubborn provinces that had grown overfond of their foster mother.⁴ A pamphlet reprinted from the *Prussian Annals* and entitled, *What Do We Demand From France?* had gone through three editions early in November. It was by von Treitschke, and derived especial interest as embodying the view of the spokesman of German Liberalism. The demand was, of course, Alsace and Lorraine. Mommsen, and even Max Müller, whose gentle spirit and ripe scholarship had so endeared him to the land of his adoption, were in favor of the forcible annexation by Prussia of the two disputed districts.⁵ That "absolute intellectual freedom in the presentation of thought," which the Earl of Lytton found an

¹ Issues of Nov. 5, 1870.

² Newton, *Lord Lyons*, vol. i, p. 342.

³ W. H. Russell, *My Diary during the Last Great War*, vol. ii, p. 225.

⁴ *Sun*, Nov. 3, 1870.

⁵ *Athenaeum*, Nov. 5, 1870.

especial characteristic of Germans,¹ forced England to see that what Bismarck had been urging was no more than the wish now of all Germany. "He moves," said *Vanity Fair*, "the King, the princes, and the people about like pawns upon a chess board."²

Those British who had believed the beneficence of German administration would palliate the injustice of annexations, were dismayed into protest by the harshness of the edicts with which the governance of the provinces was initiated. They doubted Carlyle's judgment when he said that Bismarck's gain of Alsace and Lorraine would do all the world, and even France itself, a great deal of good.³ Rather, they agreed with the *News* in believing that the territorial aggrandizement of Germany meant the territorial insecurity of Europe.⁴

It has already been shown that the conduct of the German soldiery had dampened the antebellum enthusiasm for German justice and humanity. Certain sections of the regulations on which the Landsturm had been formed to meet a French invasion were printed in November by a British journal.⁵ They made it apparent that under provocation Germany would have evolved a body comparable to the *franc tireurs*, against whom she executed such wholesale reprisals. Lady Georgiana Bloomfield brought back to London distressing accounts of the sufferings of the sick soldiers in Germany. They were packed off anyhow without medical attention and left to find their way home, or die,

¹ Balfour, *Personal and Literary Letters of Robt., First Earl of Lytton*, vol. i, p. 261.

² *Vanity Fair*, Oct. 15, 1870.

³ Conversation of Carlyle and Lecky, Duquet, *Ireland and France*, intro., p. xx.

⁴ *Daily News*, Nov. 19, 1870; *Anglo American Times*, Nov. 12, 1870.

⁵ *Once a Week*, *Anglo American Times*, issues of Nov. 19, 1870.

as best they could. Frequently they got no further than the railway stations.¹ It was all too evident that the German zeal for efficiency spent itself too prodigally in destruction to take care for the salvage of the wrecks of war.

What touched the British more nearly was the discernment of an unsuspected vastness in Prussian ambition. There were rumours that the great new state would exact a large part of the French fleet at the signing of the treaty,—that she intended to make the Baltic into a Prussian lake. The French *chargé d'affaires* in London wrote Thiers that the English were indignant at the demand of the Prussian press for Heligoland as key of the North Sea.² Weeks before, the *Diplomatic Review* had quoted Urquhart's earlier writings in an attempt to prove that it was Russia's design to erect Prussia into a maritime rival of England.³ The *Court Gazette* spoke with assurance of a secret treaty between King Wilhelm and the Tsar, which "threatened the liberty of every other people." Bismarck, it declared, was planning to join the "Great Dumb Nation" in an expedition against China for the purpose of establishing a joint control in that great Empire to the danger of British power in India.⁴ Rumours such as these were disregarded. But it was feared that real danger did exist in the passion for unification that possessed the Germans. The *Saturday Review* complained they had run mad on the idea of reuniting every part of what any professor of history chose to say had once been theirs.⁵ In the *Pall Mall Gazette* there

¹ Lady Georgiana Bloomfield, *Reminiscences of Court and Diplomatic Life*, vol. ii, p. 342.

² Tissot to Thiers, Nov. 12, 1870, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. xxxiii, p. 774.

³ *Diplomatic Review*, Oct. 12, 1870.

⁴ Nov. 5, 1870.

⁵ *Saturday Review*, Nov. 26, 1870.

was published a résumé of Dr. Wagner's pamphlet claiming Holland and German Switzerland as parts of the Fatherland. These, and every other detached part of the nation, said the eminent Professor, should be made to feel the duty of bowing to the wishes of the whole.

It came about that the crowds that attended the war concerts at the Alhambra cheered the *Marseillaise* more than *The Watch on the Rhine*.¹ They had an uneasy appreciation of the truth of the jest that appeared in *Fun*:

The where-is-the-German-Fatherland-never-sufficiently-to-be-impressed-on-all-nations question! So! We the-in-one-bond-united-of-Germany-concatenated to have that song gesungen wish. Hein so! . . . Where is the German Vaterland? Everyveres! Everyveres in-the-spirit-in-due-philosophy-of-all Teutonic aspirations born infusion-spreading-yah!

In the Crystal Palace the managers had collected a great number of chassepôts, and needle guns, and effigies of French and German soldiers. There were relics of the fields of Wörth and Sedan,—blood-rusted saber bayonets and bullets beaten out of shape. There were almost two hundred sketches by artists of the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic*, all hot with the newly visioned horrors of war.² Men came and looked, and went again into the sunlight where the autumn leaves were drifting down. And they were somehow puzzled as to whether it could be true, as Carlyle claimed, that might made right. George Eliot said that at this time the conscience of every man was trembling after some great principle as a consolation and a guide.³ Each strove for truth in his capacity and bodied his conclusions as best he could in word and deed. There

¹ *Daily News*, Nov. 11, 1870; *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 19, 1870.

² *Art Journal*, Nov., 1870.

³ Cross, *George Eliot's Life as Related in her Letters*, p. 553.

was much poor verse written and published by sympathetic editors on the pitiful ineptitude of war. Christina Rossetti was one of the more able who appealed to the armed King William and warned him that vengeance was only for the Lord.¹ Robert Buchanan limned a splendid picture of the perfect state,—the country that would let no wronged land lack assistance in extremity.² Even jocund Mr. Punch became heavily poetic in his condemnation of the hate that defied humanity.³

More effective for France than poets' lines that ran to meet their fellows with a rhyme was the martial prose of others of its defenders. In the *Contemporary*, J. M. Ludlow urged on England the abandonment of her neutrality. "Neutrality," he said, "is practically only impartial so long as two combatants are, or appear to be, equally matched; from the moment that one of the two has the upper hand, it is simply the passive acquiescence of the neutral in all the evil that the stronger may wreak upon the weaker."⁴ It was subversive of the interests of civilization that France be battered into a lesser Power. He advised that England act on a hint of Garibaldi's and call a European congress to determine how to stop the war by united action. In November, also, the *Fortnightly* published Frederic Harrison's remarkable article on "Bismarckism."⁵ Its thesis was the necessity of preventing the destruction of international morality in Europe and the restoration of the old military standard. He would have had England

¹ C. Rossetti, *Thy Brother's Blood Crieth*, *Graphic*, Nov. 5, 1870.

² Buchanan, *The Perfect State*, *Complete Poetical Works of Robt. Buchanan*, p. 338.

³ *Punch*, Nov. 19, 1870.

⁴ *Europe and the War*, *Contemporary Review*, Nov., 1870, pp. 648 *et seq.*

⁵ *Fortnightly Review*, Nov., 1870, vol. xiv, pp. 631 *et seq.*

check the progress of Prussia by diplomacy, if possible, but failing that, by force of arms. He thought she would not have to intervene alone, but could rally all the other Neutrals to her leadership. Perhaps she could have, had the laboring class controlled diplomacy. The working men of all of Europe, said the *Anglo American Times*, opposed the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine.¹ John Morley pointed out that on the salient questions of the decade they had shown themselves to have been dowered with truer vision than the "privileged orders," which now denied their sagacity. This was because the interests of the multitude could never be anti-social.²

It may be considered significant of more than a realization of present danger when diplomats were urged to assemble at a signal from Garibaldi, and when a superiority of political prescience was conceded to manual laborers. It was a time of indecision and doubt,³—a time when some advocated experiments that only increased the alarm of their fellows. Uncertainty of the future had caused a veritable strike of capital. France was buying nothing of England, save the commodities that occasioned the remonstrances of von Bernstorff. The merchant marine of Germany had been almost annihilated, and that country could be reached only through the channel of neighboring neutrals. To be sure, the business of Manchester was experiencing a renewed activity which was attributed to the enforced idleness of ten millions of French spindles.⁴ But the benefits of a few favored industries were more than counterbalanced by the general unrest. Though money was tight, the large loan asked by France had been readily subscribed late in

¹ *Anglo American Times*, Nov. 12, 1870.

² *Fortnightly Review*, Nov., 1870, vol. xiv, pp. 581 *et seq.*

³ *Cf. Banker's Magazine*, Nov., 1870.

⁴ *Spectator*, Nov. 5, 1870. *Cf. Times*, Nov. 8, 1870.

October.¹ And though the capitulation of Metz had raised the value of the French stock, since it seemed to foretell an early peace, there was yet an unselfish rejoicing when news came in mid-November that Aurelles de Paladin had won a splendid victory and recaptured Orleans.² King William sent news of this reverse to his Queen in a despatch in which there was no mention of the Deity. From the chopfallen humour of the King, the British estimated his disappointment to have been great indeed.

"Everyone seems pleased with the French success at Orleans," wrote Matthew Arnold.³ Many were glad to believe that the repulse would have a tendency to cause Prussia to diminish demands of which they disapproved. Gladstone was one of these. He wrote to Lord Lyons that he was to the last degree reluctant to promote compliance on the part of France with the change in the political status of the citizens of Alsace and Lorraine.⁴

On the night following the reentry of the French into Orleans, the Lord Mayor of London held his annual banquet at the Guildhall. The feast was made the occasion for a more or less formal indication of the changed attitude of the British toward the two contestants. It was declared that the war, at the outset, had been waged by Germany for a purpose which had their hearty endorsement but that it had been continued for conquest and was no longer praiseworthy.⁵ The Lord Chief Baron, in presenting the new Mayor to the Baron of the Exchequer, delivered a eulogy on the virtues of France and a homily on the ambitions of

¹ *Weekly Scotsman*, Nov. 5, 1870.

² *London Times*, Nov. 12, 1870.

³ *Letters of Matthew Arnold* (edited by W. E. Russell, London, 1896), vol. ii, p. 53.

⁴ Gladstone to Lyons, Nov. 7, 1870, Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. i, pp. 334-335.

⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 10, 1870.

Prussia. His extravagance of praise and blame were excused by the *News* on the assumption that he, like so many good Englishmen, was suffering from "war on the brain."¹ The Minister of War in his speech made an opportunity for getting before the people his plan for the formation of a large army of reserves. The Lord Chancellor eagerly defended his country's observance of neutrality. Gladstone, in a manner, seconded the pleas and assertions of his colleagues, and after sententious observations on the horrors of war, declared it England's duty to interpose at a proper time to secure a permanent peace.² The speech of Granville was a courteous intimation to the Premier that he had, perhaps, somewhat deviated, as men are wont to do at banquets, from the rectilinear correctness of his official attitude. The war was none of England's making, he said. France and Germany both had pronounced it to have been inevitable. England had done her full share in pacific endeavour both before and since its inception, and, though by no means intending to discontinue her labours, would be quite happy to see peace brought about by the belligerents alone, or by another of the Neutral Powers.³

Some of the papers thought that in these speeches quite enough had been said. Others regretted that Gladstone's desire for a permanent peace had not impelled a definite pronouncement against Germany's wish for aggrandizement. The Ministers were overacting their neutral role, said the *Spectator*, like the man who insisted on colouring himself all over before he would go on for Othello.⁴ But

¹ *Daily News*, Nov. 11, 1870; *Spectator*, Nov. 12, 1870.

² *Illustrated London News*, Nov. 12, 1870.

³ *Spectator*, Nov. 12, 1870. At about this time Bruce made an im-politic speech in which he likened France to a house-breaker and asserted that her destruction would make for England's future peace and prosperity.

⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, Nov. 12, 1870.

from that paper's own résumé of the November speeches the members of Parliament were making in the provinces, the Government would have had the backing of neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives as parties, had it espoused the cause of France.¹ Thiers, however, was encouraged by the Guildhall speeches, and by a letter from the *chargé d'affaires* in London urging that he take advantage of the increased sympathy for France. Tissot had been assured by Mr. Otway, an under-secretary of Granville's department, that the feeling against Germany would end in the formation of a European coalition.² In consequence of these bright auguries, Thiers approached Lord Lyons with a project for uniting with France, Austria, Italy, Turkey, and Spain. This, he thought, would lead to a general congress for the settlement of peace. He was willing to assign to England the leading part in bringing these fine things about. Lyons wrote to Granville, on the fourteenth, that he had deemed it prudent to listen and say nothing, "which was never difficult with Thiers."³

Great Britain was in no mood for forming a coalition to oppose Prussia. Rather, she was negotiating even more timorously than hitherto. At about the time of the above statements to Granville, John Scott Russell, F. R. S., was in Versailles with high hopes that he might obtain a passport into Paris and be enabled to visit there a friend who was a member of the Committee of Defence. It was his plan to find out from this friend the terms on which Paris might be won to a capitulation and then, by communicating them to the German authorities, open the way for a resumption of negotiations. He claimed to have been encouraged to un-

¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 5, 1870.

² Tissot to Thiers, Nov. 12, 1870, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. xxxiii, pp. 773-774.

³ Newton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 338.

dertake his mission by authority much higher than his own. But whatever hint he gave at Versailles of his semi-official character, it availed him no more than did his acquaintance with the King and Bismarck, and their knowledge of the great public works he had constructed for Prussia.¹ He was whisked off bag and baggage, wrote the correspondent of the *Times*, and given orders not to attempt to visit Paris and not to show himself again at Versailles.

It would seem that the Prussian leaders were in no happy humour at this time, and the rather presumptuous requests of Mr. Russell drew upon him greater severity than in themselves they merited. The reason for the surcharged atmosphere was the arrival at Versailles, on the fourteenth, of a Russian general with a most unwelcome letter from his Emperor. It was an announcement to the King of Prussia of the Russian abrogation of those articles of the Treaty of 1856, which had to do with the neutralisation of the Black Sea. Bismarck, according to Lord Augustus Loftus, was enraged at the stupid impatience which precipitated an event which he considered would not have been timely for a good four weeks.² The date of the repudiation, October the twenty-ninth, showed Russia had exercised some forbearance in restraining herself for a fortnight. But Bismarck could not believe that any advantage was derived from postponing its publication from the days following the capture of Metz to the days following the loss of Orleans. The news that Russia had sent circulars announcing her repudiation to the European courts was given the *Times* correspondent by the Duke of Coburg on the following day. What will England do? Russell was asked on all sides, and when he kept silence the Prussians replied for him,

¹ J. S. Russell, *Into Versailles and Out*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, Feb., 1871, vol. xxiii, pp. 319 *et seq.*

² Lord Augustus Loftus, *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, vol. i, p. 335.

"Nothing." It was a humiliating moment for the famous reporter of the Crimea, who had spent two years of his life on the plateau in front of Sebastopol. He feared the Prussians were right in their belief that England would submit. "Our old alliances are gone," he confided to his diary, "and our new alliances are valueless, and all we have left to make us remember the Crimean War is the income tax."¹

In London the publication of Prince Gortchakoff's Circular created a furore. The conviction that armed force would be opposed to the Russian attempt caused a panic comparable to the one precipitated by the French declaration of war. The indignation of the press was intense and immensely disturbing to the pacific ministry. Resentment was heightened because there had existed a tendency to deride those who had pointed to Russia with suspicion. "Urquhartism," the *News* had declared in September, "is as extinct as the faith of the Jacobites."² It had been thought victorious Prussia would act, not in connivance with, but in opposition to those Russian designs which were anti-thetic to British interests. Men were eager to make so clamorous their indignation that no echo of their past complacency could survive. Lord Granville's prompt answer to the Circular, declaring it impossible for his Government to sanction Russia's repudiation, gave only partial satisfaction. The *Standard* of the seventeenth declared the Circular a direct challenge and a provocation to battle. It prophesied the Ministry could not survive a week unless it put away its childish dreams of peace. It was not only in the Opposition press that bellicose statements continued to appear. The *Scotsman* demanded that Prussia, as a co-signer of the Treaty of 1856, should be required actively to

¹ W. H. Russell, *My Diary during the Last Great War*, pp. 457-458.

² *Daily News*, Sept. 12, 1870.

oppose Russia under pain of being regarded as a party to her crime.¹ *Pall Mall* advised that inquiry be made of Prussia as to whether she would aid in enforcing the observance of the treaty. In the event of a reply that was delayed or ambiguous, *Pall Mall* recommended an immediate declaration of war. Its editor's opinion was that the response would be unfavorable: "The complaints of the Prussian Government against England and her exports began the moment the war began. They did not begin mildly, but boisterously, and in a surprisingly minatory way. They were designed to set up a grievance, to give grounds for a quarrel."² The *Northern Whig* shared the opinion of *Pall Mall* as to the course the Government should take. The *Telegraph* and the *Guardian* displayed their ingenuity in adducing unpleasant facts to support the theory of a Russo-Prussian alliance. Gortchakoff was believed to have out-Bismarcked Bismarck in calling at this time for a public acknowledgment of that *quid pro quo* he had been promised for neutrality.³ It was the conviction of Prussian complicity that brought anger to fever heat. Bismarck was thought to be behind Gortchakoff, beating time with his mighty arm, as in the children's game of Dumb Orator, to the threats that Russia voiced. It was seen that two great wars could not be waged on the Continent without eventually being merged into one. Many believed that Russia would be as surely punished and England would fight for a better cause, if the Government chose to coöperate with France rather than make direct war on the eastern nation.⁴

¹ *Scotsman*, Nov. 19, 1870.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 17, 1870.

³ Issues of Nov. 17, 18, respectively.

⁴ *Spectator*, Nov. 19, 1870.

Ireland more than matched England in manifesting its indignation. The *Belfast Examiner* urged the "immediate release of France from the fangs of Prussia" as the only means of saving Europe from tyranny.¹ The *Nation* rejoiced that England could avert war only by an abject humiliation, and that if she did not do so, she might be induced to a favorable settlement of the Irish question.²

"Never was there a time," said the *Illustrated*, "when Britain was less disposed to put up with insult, never a time when she was more disposed to do justice."³ The reaction against an impassivity that had proven disastrous was alarmingly strong. "The Government appears to be in trouble," wrote Disraeli to Lord Derby, "and probably will continue to be so."⁴ Not only its policy, its very composition was under fire. So long as Bright remained a member of the Cabinet, men said that Russia would discount to the minimum the apparent firmness of Lord Granville.⁵ For it was known that Bright had always opposed some of the clauses of the disputed treaty. Tradition had it that the Emperor Nicholas declared on his death-bed that he had been betrayed into war by his belief in the Manchester School.⁶ The *Evening Mail* of Dublin noted hopefully a rumour that Bright would resign, were the Russian Circular treated as a *casus belli*.⁷ The *Standard* recommended that the country generously retire him with the pension to which he would be entitled by a few weeks more

¹ *Belfast Daily Examiner*, Nov. 22, 1870.

² *Irish Nation*, Nov. 19, 1870.

³ *Illustrated Daily News*, Nov. 19, 1870.

⁴ Disraeli to Derby, Nov. 27, 1870, Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. v, p. 130.

⁵ Nov. 30, 1870.

⁶ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 22, 1870.

⁷ Issues of Nov. 21, 1870.

of service.¹ A timorous or over-dexterous diplomacy, said *Pall Mall*, would inevitably miscarry, should the Cabinet continue to be discommoded by his presence.² He was considered the apostle of the unfailing pacifism of those traders, who, so long as the trade in calico thrived, were indifferent as to the success of their country's policy. It was not John Bright's nature to be disturbed by criticism. He was uneasy about what course the Cabinet might take, and he urged on Gladstone every reason that he could to permit Russia to have a fleet on the Black Sea and an arsenal on its coast, if such were her desires.³

The Government sent Odo Russell to Versailles to interview Count Bismarck on the matter. It gave, by this, a practical recognition of the exigency that had occasioned France to send her envoy to Ems rather than to Madrid for the discussion of the Hohenzollern candidature. Perhaps it was a realization that one should not clearly condemn an example one has to follow that caused Gladstone, at this time, to repent his published criticism of the French. He attempted to get the *Times* to intimate that he had been only the "inspirer" of the *Edinburgh* article.⁴ Odo Russell felt himself to be in a position even more dubious than that of the Prime Minister. He was uncertain as to his instructions, and, as he confided to Dr. Russell, somewhat anxious as to the sort of reception he might get from Bismarck. The famous correspondent could give him but slight encouragement. Matters, he admitted, were very unsatisfactory. There was a conviction in the Prussian camp that England, by not having restrained France, was

¹ *Standard*, Nov. 24, 1870.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 22, 1870.

³ Trevelyan, *Life of John Bright*, pp. 417-418.

⁴ Disraeli to Derby, Nov. 27, Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, vol. v, pp. 130-131.

really responsible for the war. It was said she was jealous of Prussian success and eager to prevent German unification. The Crown Prince, however, was not antagonistic. And, even among those who were, there existed a certain basic sentiment that English transgressions should be tolerated, since she was an "offshoot of the Germanic race." Junkerdom was pleased, too, that Granville had sent an envoy to discuss the violent rupture of a treaty that England had allowed Prussia to sign only through the insistence of France.

It was Bismarck, himself, who told Dr. Russell of the outcome of the mission: "This whole question is to be settled by half a dozen sensible men sitting around a table and talking it over quietly." An attendant brought his cloak to the Chancellor while they were conversing. It was lined with Russian sable, and as he put it on he added with a grim smile, "It is not a matter for ill blood, or for war, or angry language. It is quite certain that I have no desire to see Europe enveloped as I am." And he drew his fur coat about his ears—bade the correspondent goodnight, and drove off to the Chancellery.

The next day, the twenty-second, the news leaked out at Versailles that Odo Russell's tone at his interview had not indicated that complaisance which had been expected from an envoy at the headquarters of the conquering Prussians. He had threatened with undiplomatic directness that unless Bismarck could get Russia to withdraw the Circular, England would be compelled to go to war, with or without allies. The correspondent of the *Times*, who had been grieved that Granville's firm reply to Gortchakoff should waver into submission to a Conference, recovered his high spirits. He believed that England had consented to Prussia's plan only on the understanding that Russia would be induced to make a preliminary renunciation of her claims. It was a

fine thing to be a Briton, wrote the old correspondent of the Crimea. "Instead of being a nation of sordid traders engaged in prolonging war, we have suddenly become a chivalrous people, prepared to enter upon an immense struggle solely to vindicate our honour and maintain an idea."¹

But Odo Russell had made his declaration only on the hypothesis that he could do whatever he had not been told not to do. His own conception of British obligations so differed from his chief's that he had to enter into elaborate explanations of his reasons for having exceeded his instructions.² What he had done was not repudiated, since it had gained Prussian permission for the convoking of a congress. But it was, nevertheless, disavowed by implication when, a month later, Russia was allowed to enter the Conference without having revoked the Circular that had caused its convention. The few days gained by sending an envoy to Versailles had taken the edge from English anger. It was safe now to postpone accepting the resignation that John Bright had tendered on the score of ill health. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had impressed on the exquisite Dorothy Nevill that she preach the only gospel, "peace at any price," and the pretty creature, wrote Disraeli, cynically, went about society preaching accordingly.³ Gortchakoff's supplementary note, it was declared, implied that the despatch was meant to be only an emphatic expression of discontent.⁴ Count Bismarck, though expressing no disapproval of the objects and demands of Russia, had disavowed complicity in her presentation of the Circular. This reassurance was published.⁵

¹ W. H. Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 470-473; Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 73.

² Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, pp. 353-354.

³ Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 131.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 23, 1870.

⁵ Cf. W. H. Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 494-495; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 29, 1870.

To be sure there were rumblings from the press. The *Standard* urged, insidiously, that England refuse to submit to an insult that she could punish almost without effort.¹ The *Manchester Examiner* refused to follow its sister, the *Guardian*, into the paths of peace.² A correspondent of the *News* managed to get published in that pacific journal, an account of the alleged arrangement arrived at by Gortchakoff and Bismarck at the war's outbreak. *Pall Mall* pointed out, as a strong argument for its authenticity, the news from Versailles that it was understood there that Russia would yield to friendly representations and the decisions of a conference.³ Such assurance of Russian intentions was utterly lacking in London. Bismarck's statement seemed more that of the partner to an agreement than that of a merely neutral onlooker. *Fun* carried clever cartoons showing Bismarck as a bear tamer with John Bull offering his charge a cannon ball to try his teeth on when he had done with devouring treaties. *Judy* showed the Chancellor as a laundress trying to hide from Constable Bull a devout King William and a very well-armed and ferocious bear.

Before the month was out the press, for the most part, came to believe in a conference as the only desideratum. The *Nation* dolorously suspected that, whatever else was done, England would not fight, and Ireland would have to wait another opportunity to attempt to gain a repeal of the Union. The British publicists, it said, would pretend to find in Gortchakoff's later language sufficient satisfaction for their offended dignity. The *Irish Freeman* was in agreement with the *Nation*, and derided the English attempts to deck out the scarecrow fright so that it might appear as embodied justice and moderation. They were im-

¹ *Standard*, Nov. 21, 1870.

² Cf. editorials of two papers for Nov. 21, 1870.

³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 29, 1870; *Irish Freeman*, Nov. 26, 1870.

patient of the *Times*, which was using all its influence to hush the anger against Russia.¹ Delane's unique opinion was that the Gortchakoff note was the outcome of Thiers's journey to St. Petersburg, and could be easily disposed of by a congress.²

While Odo Russell was abroad, the cause of peace was favoured at home by the very diverse writings of several eminent men. John Stuart Mill, in private and public letters, advised his country to yield to Russia her demands. He was frankly distrustful of British military strength. But he based his main plea on the fallacy of regarding treaties as being contracted in perpetuity. It should be expected, he said, that irksome obligations would be disavowed so soon as the barrier of fear was removed from the nation that had submitted to them. He recommended that Russia be allowed her abrogation, and that England save her dignity by issuing a protest reserving liberty of action.³ The Earl of Shaftesbury was seriously disturbed by a doctrine legalizing only those documents to which the signatories were in voluntary agreement. He feared that if England sanctioned its principles there would be difficulty in bringing wars to a conclusion. How could Prussia feel security in a treaty with France, if it were conceded that that country should be allowed to abrogate it so soon as she felt herself strong? As to what touched England more nearly, diplomats must have seen that the recognition of this arm-chair philosophy would drive a wedge into the foundation of the British Empire. Treaties of her own inclined so heavily in England's favour that her co-signatories might be expected to welcome the prin-

¹ *Irish Freeman*, Nov. 26, 1870.

² Delane to Dasent, Nov. 27, 1870, Dasent, *John Delane*, vol. ii, p. 278.

³ Mill to *Times*, Nov. 22, 1870; cf. also his letters to friends Nov. 18, 19, 21, 1870, *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, vol. ii, pp. 278-283.

ciple that no sanction save that of power existed to legalize her advantages.¹

The letters from the historian, Froude, published at this time; avoided any argument as to abstract principles, but heartily agreed with Mill's decision that the Russian action should be tolerated. E. A. Freeman, too, published his opinion that war with Russia would be monstrous.² And the very concrete proposal of Lord John Russell for immediate mobilization gave a hint to the nation of what it would mean to translate angry words into angry acts.³ At the Reform Club and the Carlton men still grumbled at the taxes entailed by the war of the Crimea. The horrors of its campaign were of contemporary memory.

Thomas Carlyle at this time rendered service by diverting to his own person some of the excess emotion that had been venting itself in indignation at Russia. Men were enraged by his dogmatic assumptions that it was "perfectly just, rational, and wise that Germany should take Alsace and Lorraine home with her;" that France had been smitten into "hideous wreck and impotence, testifying to gods and men what extent of rottenness and hidden vileness lay in her;" that "noble, patient, deep, pious, and solid Germany should become Queen of the Continent."⁴ The *Globe* regretted that the sage of Chelsea had grown unjust and ill-logical in his retirement.⁵ The *Spectator* marvelled that he advised as panacea for European ills, an enforcement of the law of retaliation.⁶ The *Standard* was stung to the quick

¹ *Globe and Traveller*, Nov. 22, 1870.

² *Evening Mail*, Nov. 22, 1870.

³ Nov. letters to *Times*.

⁴ Letter to *Times*, Nov. 18, 1870.

⁵ *Globe*, Nov. 18, 1870.

⁶ *Spectator*, Nov. 19, 1870.

by his derision of the "cheap pity and newspaper lamentation over fallen and afflicted France." It advised Carlyle that mercy would better become him than the singing of hosannahs to the God of Vengeance who armed the Prussian hosts.¹ Even the *News*, which condoned passion and exultation as excusable on the part of a nation that was victorious, regretted that he had so distorted facts as to make Prussia appear the victorious innocent and France the deceitful villain of a Surrey melodrama.²

Certain it is that the vigour of his convictions had led Carlyle to hymn his praise and chant his hate on a most inopportune occasion. The Gortchakoff Circular had brought home to England the danger of having France become a Power of the second rank. Even those who believed that Prussia had not been an accomplice in the Russian plan, still said that no single signatory of the treaty would have dared its repudiation had France been able to join England in resistance. The press became adept at discovering chances for French success. "Who counsels submission now?" asked *Pall Mall* in the last week of November. "Who speaks today of the folly and wickedness of not giving in?" The *News*, which once had administered discouraging counsel to France, "in epigram in the smart manner," was now commending her for efforts which deserved success. Gambetta, it found, had acted with wonderful energy and decision. He had roused all of France, made generals and organized armies. He was about to make the Prussians feel they had made a mistake in marching on Paris without having reduced the provinces. The *Telegraph*, which *Pall Mall* described as having tearfully advised submission, while its great heart throbbed in agony and delighted in each throb, conceded that "the

¹ *Standard*, Nov. 19, 1870.

² *Daily News*, Dec. 14, 1870.

predictions of the wise had never been so signally falsified as during the present war." As for the *Times*, it had ceased to warn France "in the words of Omniscience and in the voice of Fate."¹ It now professed events to be so doubtful as to admit of some discussion as to how the balance ultimately would incline. Men believe largely what they wish to believe. In late November there was good reason to wish that Gambetta, who was "displaying the energy of a Jacobin and the self restraint of an English Cabinet Minister,"² might yet expel the Prussians, or, at least, conclude an honourable peace.

Every kind of effort made now by the Provisional Government received encouragement. England read sympathetically a pamphlet by a certain M. Renouf, which it was understood had been inspired by Thiers. She was in no mood to cavil at the accusations it made against Bismarck or the Government of the Empire.³ The official protest against German atrocities, published by Chaudordy on the twenty-ninth, could not have been issued at a time more opportune. Its authenticated lists of instances of violence would have caused horror at any time, but a present grievance against Prussia somewhat prolonged the shudder.⁴ It was fitting that England should grieve over the bruises of a broken reed when she needed to rejoice in the strength of an ally.

On the day before the Chaudordy Circular was published, Granville was instructing Lyons to use all his influence to obtain the assent of France to the proposed Conference. He was to point out that it was a great step for the Provisional Government that Prussia had asked England to

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 24, 1870.

² *Spectator*, Nov. 19, 1870.

³ Résumé of pamphlet in *Saturday Review*, Nov. 26, 1870.

⁴ Paul Deschanel, *Gambetta* (N. Y., 1920), pp. 117-118.

exert her good offices in this.¹ On the night of the thirtieth all London was in gloom because it was believed that Paris had capitulated.² She had not. Her armies had even taken Brie and Champigny, but imperfect communication between the capital and Tours had caused the sortie to fail. On the second of December, the Parisian Army was forced to retreat. Its efforts had resulted disastrously and had afforded, too, a pretext for Prussia to end the negotiations that Thiers was conducting for the Government of Tours.

Had the sortie been successful, or had France won one other such victory as that of Orleans, the shift in the sympathy of the *Times* and the *News* might have been followed by a recognition of the Republic. But so quickly did disaster follow on the brief success of late November that within a fortnight Orleans was lost and the Tours Government was forced to take refuge in Bordeaux.

The Government of its enemy had never been stronger. British papers carried news of the opening of the German Parliament. King William had come before it with the grateful announcement that Baden and Hesse Darmstadt had become states of the Confederation; that the accession of Württemberg had been definitely arranged, and that of Bavaria was soon to be expected. His statement that the war would be prosecuted until necessary frontiers were gained had received hearty approbation.³ He had spoken as a conqueror. It might be expected that the delegate he would send in the succeeding month to London would come as the envoy of a conqueror. The energy of Gambetta and the victory of Aurelles de Paladin had encouraged England for a space to hope that she might have the support of the ally who had helped her exact from

¹ Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. ii, p. 340.

² *Times*, Dec. 1, 1870.

³ *Daily News* and *Saturday Review*, Nov. 26, 1870.

Russia provisions which were become a subject for discussion. It was feared now that, even were France represented, her envoy would have no more weight than a shadow on the wall. "We must vail our proud tops," wrote Sir James Hudson. Sir Robert Morier assented. People asked him, he said, with a sort of pitying condescension if he were an Englishman.¹ At Vienna Mr. Lytton inveighed against the "hen hearted and pin headed Cabinet" that made its agents ridiculous, and negatived every idea of carrying out a consecutive foreign policy.

¹ *Memoirs of Sir Robt. Morier*, vol. ii, p. 210.

CHAPTER XIII

ANARCHIC DECEMBER

THE delayed publication, early in December, of Gortchakoff's second note, from which the Government had ostensibly derived much comfort, was a revelation to the British public of how easily a Manchester Ministry could be satisfied.¹ Russia, in her reply, no more than signified a willingness to join in a deliberation having for its object the settlement of guarantees for the consolidation of peace in the East, making no retraction of her previous assertion that she no longer considered herself bound by the Black Sea clauses of the treaty of 1856. As excuse for her precipitate and irregular conduct, she mentioned the absence of a regular government in France, which postponed the possibility of the treaty's modification by a conference.² Many believed with the *Standard* that Gortchakoff, had he wished to be frank, might have added that it was this lack and the assured friendliness of Prussia which had enabled him to take the law into his own hands.³ More was suspected than was known, for the Foreign Office held back the fact that Bismarck had refused to accede to a tripartite agreement, guaranteeing the Treaty of 1856, the provisions of which

¹ "In keeping back the publication of Prince Gortchakoff's reply to Lord Granville. The Government secured a substantial advantage. . . . If the tenor of the St. Petersburg despatch had been made public while the issue of peace or war still seemed doubtful, it would have evoked an outburst of feeling which must have materially impaired any prospect of a pacific solution." *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 3, 1870.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 6, 1870; *Spectator*, Dec. 3, 1870.

³ *Standard*, Dec. 6, 1870; *Nation*, Dec. 10, 1870.

would have stopped at once the irregular action of Russia.¹ But the simple fact that the note was implicitly a reaffirmation rather than a denial of Russia's previously expressed intentions, went far to strengthen the suspicion of Prussian connivance.²

More than ever, men were eager that France be present at the council board.³ The matter, it was conceded, presented difficulties. The French government had not won the recognition of any of the signatories of the treaty about to be discussed. In the society of European states she was classed as an illegal power that could send only an unauthorized representative. There was prevalent an idea, said the *Spectator*, that, though kings and emperors might be recognized offhand as persons naturally entitled to rule, republics should be officially ignored until legalized by a vote. Still, in a matter of extremity, it expressed the hope that the aristocratic Secretary who presided at No. 10, Downing Street, might not sacrifice an alliance for the sake of a bit of diplomatic etiquette.⁴ When it became known that the Cabinet had decided to break the monotony of reading of French defeats by taking its holidays, men realized punctilio was still to be observed. The exodus of the Ministers from the capital, however, did not serve to advance any belief in the placid and pleasant future of a country that was being placidly and pleasantly governed while Europe was involving itself in a veritable maelstrom. Editors, who had no time to indulge in "the usual round of Christ-

¹ Odo Russell to Granville, Dec. 18, 1870, Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 74.

² *Saunders'*, Dec. 5, 1870; *Illustrated London News*, Dec. 3, 1870. For account of meeting of Emperor of Russia and King William at Ems in June, 1870, see Capt. Edward Prim, *War Chronicle of 1870* (London, 1871).

³ *Standard*, Dec. 1, 1870; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 24, 1871.

⁴ *Spectator*, Dec. 3, 1870.

mas entertainments," found it more than ever pleasurable to criticize the Government for its impassivity.

"Driftwood politicians," they were called, "with no strong, stern, proud principles to guide them," spun round and round by the tempest of the war, insanely watching the play of a Russian nor'easter, and liking it.¹ Some day, warned the *Court Gazette*, the Prussian Empire would strike a blow to support itself by war, and "five hundred Cobdens arrayed in voluminous speech" could not convince an Englishman of common sense that the dangerous time should not be prepared for.² From nowhere did they receive so scathing an indictment as from the dignified pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. That publication was most heartily fatigued at the "so-called policy of peace inaugurated by Quaker platitudes at Christian tea meetings." The principles of the Bright and Gladstone school were highly moral,—more, they were angelic—"based on the holiest and best aspirations of a virtuous people. If they had angels to deal with, angels for subjects, angels for neighbors, angels for allies, angels for foes—an angelic policy of liberty, love and mutual trust would be in perfect order." But England, it reminded its readers, was possessed of five hundred million square miles of territory in all parts of the world. It could not be governed by the principles of Mr. Bright's carpet warehouse, even when embellished by the sophistries of Lowe, and sweetened by the economics of the "noble Savage." The mission of England was to stand between the contending nations of Europe and it had shamefully forsaken it, due to the pretty moral notions of "sugar and carpet philosophers."³

¹ *Imperial Federation in Contemporary Review*, Dec., 1870.

² *Court Gazette*, Dec. 10, 1870.

³ *Russia's Gage of Battle in Gentleman's Magazine*, Dec., 1870, vol. vi, pp. 105 *et seq.*

Their own dissatisfaction induced the English to contemplate with a certain degree of pleasure the difficulties that were being experienced in a country which they were beginning to regard with disfavour. It had been believed at first that a parliament had been elected in Germany wholly to Count Bismarck's liking. But, though Dr. Jacoby had been defeated because of his opposition to the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine,¹ it was apparent from a debate on the war that the Government had still to encounter open opposition. Four of the Socialist deputies braved the anger of their colleagues by pleading that moderation be shown to France. They were silenced, and men cried out that their bones should be broken.² But in the extreme Left of the Socialist Party there were many to echo their denunciation of the annexation. On the tenth of December the question of transforming the German Confederation into an Empire provoked further opposition. Six of the party voted against the change, and refused to accede to the proposal to make the Prussian King an Emperor. Two of these recalcitrants, Herr Liebknecht and Herr Bebel, were, within a few days, arrested, though their adverse vote was not assigned as the cause of their arrest. They had signed a manifesto, issued from Brunswick by the leaders of the party, opposing annexation, and this was supposed to be the basis for the charge of treason.³ A popular democratic journal that questioned the right of their arrest was immediately seized in Berlin. "Whatever King William and his great Minister may be," said the *Economist*, "the last thing one would accuse them of being is Liberal."⁴ The Reuter News Agency, which re-

¹ *Spectator*, Nov. 19, 1870.

² *Ibid.*, Dec. 3, 1870.

³ *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 21, 1870, *Spectator*, Dec. 24, 1870; *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 22, 1870.

⁴ *Economist*, Dec. 24, 1870.

ceived its information from the German firm of Wolff, transmitted no news of these events to London. This, according to the *Telegraph*, was because the German company, in this instance, was forbidden the right of publication.¹ Why the offense of the deputies should have been described as high treason was a matter which the enterprising correspondent of the *Telegraph*, who first had gotten the news to England, could not explain. Long afterward it was revealed that the severe charge had been made because the Marxists, Bebel and Liebknecht, were found to have been attempting to organize a rising in Berlin, and had opened negotiations to that end with the Lassalle branch of the Socialist Party.² Their imprisonment prevented them from embarking on an enterprise which would have been impotent, except for the advertisement it would have given abroad, that there existed a German party recklessly opposed to the Government's aims.

In Alsace itself the conquerors showed themselves equally strong and ready to crush incipient revolt. Those natives who expressed too loudly their discontent at being "reunited," were punished by courts martial. In retaliation the Alsatians, who before had spoken a patois, now spoke French.³ Lord Lyons wrote his chief that he did not wonder at the increase of irritation against the Germans. But it was somewhat illogical that Germany should show herself angry at not being loved, and resolve to have it out on France while she was weak.⁴ None but a German, said the *Spectator*, would chasten a people under invasion for

¹ *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 23, 1870.

² *Life of H. M. Hyndman* (New York, 1911), pp. 391-393.

³ *Spectator*, Dec. 24, 1870.

⁴ Lyons to Granville, Dec. 26, 1870, Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. ii, pp. 15-16.

expressing their displeasure, and expect to have his hand kissed while he did it.¹

Not content with pointing out her misdeeds to Germany, many British continued to accuse their own Government of being criminally negligent in taking no steps to prevent them. The erection of terrorism into a system was making it more and more apparent that European peace and progress were not to come from Bismarckism. Freeman and Carlyle might insist that military success led to German unity—a blessing for civilization, but in spite of such eminent opinion, the party grew that believed the outcome of Prussian victories meant no more than the imperial magnifying of a feudal lord.

It was Frederic Harrison's wish to crystallize this discontent into a demand for active intervention.² Paris still held out, and he hoped that by popular demand the British Parliament might reconvene before she was won to a surrender. His article on Bismarckism in the *Fortnightly* had roused widespread discussion. For the most part it had been commended. It was doubted, though, if its author could succeed in his honourable endeavour to combine the foreign policy of Chatham with national armaments small enough to be carried in a carpetbag. It seemed anomalous that a plea for intervention should be coupled with a plea against the increase of the British army.³ Could the balance of power be maintained by the protocols of a Government that foreign diplomats believed had turned their bullets into ledgers? But Mr. Harrison was loath for England to import the ideals of Prussia.⁴ He condemned with fiery

¹ *Spectator*, Dec. 24, 1870.

² Fred Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs* (London, 1911), vol. ii, p. 3.

³ *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 6, 1870.

⁴ *Standard*, Dec. 10, 1870.

eloquence the "swordsman's jargon and garrison cant" that were employed to disguise the professional lust of her strategists. His series of letters, that began with the group published in *Pall Mall* early in December,¹ showed him to be strong-sinewed—capable of wielding a battle axe as ably as the "Sage of Chelsea." He had the knack, as the *Echo* said, of sending an ugly epithet at the head of an antagonist with the force of a brickbat;² the capacity, said the *Spectator*, of good honest hating that was veritably Christian, because the enjoyment it produced was so great that one had to love the enemy who had occasioned it.³ For all that, he was not the man to bring public opinion to the point of intervention. The Conservatives were offended by his hostility to national armaments and his affection for Republicanism.⁴ The Whigs were wearied by his stress on the international duties which he believed devolved on England.⁵

Proofs, however, of his charges of imperialism against Germany continued to appear. On December the tenth the *Spectator* recorded the petition of Bremen to the German Parliament that it obtain the King's consent to a demand for the cession of French Cochin China. The prospect that Pondicherry and Chandernagore might also become Prussian was disquieting. It was not to be expected the new Empire would, in India, prove so easy a neighbour as France had been. She might attempt to invade England's monopoly of the growth of opium and the sale of salt. She might reject the principle France had adhered to of refusing aid to native Powers that dared revolt. One may

¹ Fred. Harrison, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 3-4.

² *Echo*, Dec. 9, 1870.

³ *Spectator*, Dec. 10, 1870.

⁴ *Standard*, Dec. 10; *Illustrated London News*, Dec. 10, 1870.

⁵ Fred. Harrison, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 10-12.

presume the India House was pleased when the German Parliament decided to postpone dividing the bear's skin until the animal showed itself less lively.

This evidence of a Prussian regard for the fitness of things was counterbalanced, however, when on the same day that the *Spectator* commended the decision against demanding Cochin China, the *Globe* announced that Prussia had repudiated the Treaty of 1867, which guaranteed the neutrality of Luxemburg. Even Mr. Mill, with his advanced ideas about the limitations of treaties, it was thought, might find the pace becoming over-rapid. Two days before this, it had been reported by *Pall Mall* that Bismarck was negotiating with the King of Holland for the duchy's cession.¹ The announcement of the *Independance Belge*, on which the *Globe* based its warning, was more alarming and was rumoured to have been confirmed by a circular sent to Count von Bernstorff. Prussia, it was claimed, due to Luxemburg's disregard for the obligations of neutrality, declared herself absolved from further observation of the Treaty of London.² The fact that the little country that had angered Prussia rested its safety on a guarantee which was collective, freed England, said the *News* and the *Record*, from obligation the moment the treaty was denounced by another of its signatories.³ Nevertheless, it was admitted that it would be dangerous to condone the repudiation by a single Power of a treaty that had been signed in concert.⁴ The case against Prussia seemed darker when it was remembered that the treaty had been signed four years

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 18, 1870.

² *Times*, Dec. 14, 1870.

³ Issues of Dec. 13, 14, respectively.

⁴ *Standard*, Dec. 13; *Weekly Freeman*, Dec. 17, 1870; *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 14, 1870.

before primarily on her solicitation. That the treaty's violation invoked collective action, or none at all, was denied by many, who declared the opinions of Derby and Stanley to that effect had been no more than posterior declarations and could in no way retroactively invalidate the individual obligation. For only in one clause was the guarantee spoken of as being collective. No action, however, it was conceded, was incumbent on a guarantor until it was requested by the King of Holland. While his representations were awaited, England indulged in arguments as to how far she was obligated to render him assistance.

So little was the Cabinet trusted that *Pall Mall* reported, as current, a rumour that the Prussian annexation had been agreed to by the Government in consideration of the abandonment of designs on Lorraine.¹ Amazing as such an agreement would have been, however, it is even more amazing to find that this very scheme had been advocated two months before by a journal that now was most vociferous in urging Luxemburg's protection. It was the *Standard* that on October the twentieth had suggested that if Prussia could not content herself with increase of territory, an equivalent might be found for Alsace and Lorraine by the annexation of Luxemburg. On the same day the *Sun* had remarked that "upon certain conditions the annexation of Luxemburg to Prussia might be a laudable and satisfactory procedure, and the powers might wisely wink at the setting aside of the treaty in order to facilitate the arrangement."

On the fourteenth of December, the *Telegraph* gave out, for what it was worth, a statement that Luxemburg already had been occupied by Prussian troops. Very soon, the news was found to have been false. But England was uneasily conscious that, had it been true, it was doubtful whether her

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 14, 1870.

Government would have done anything further than to split hairs and to resort to the "complete letter writer" style of condonement of the offense. *The Morning Advertiser* cried out for on hour of Henry the Eighth, of Cromwell, or of Pitt.¹ The country was very weary of having its pride poulticed with politely worded remonstrances. The similarity of Bismarck's denunciation of the treaty of 1867 to Gortchakoff's repudiation of the treaty of 1856 was alarmingly convincing of the disrespect with which the leader of the League of Neutrals had come to be regarded.² England writhed at having to receive, so soon, a second lesson in the practices of the new militarism. *Saunders'* voiced the sentiment of practically all the press when it bewailed the fact that confidence was overthrown, and the only security against aggression henceforth would be in bayonets and ordnance.³ The *Times* believed that British connivance at Bismarck's pretensions in regard to Luxemburg would be fatal to the good faith of international agreements and result in a succession of internecine contests to test out the military strength of nations.⁴

Sir Robert Morier named, as the more immediate effect of Prussia's action, the restoration of Louis Napoleon with the gift of the French portion of Belgium to buy him a welcome. In return, he said Germany would expect what was left of Belgium together with Luxemburg and Holland.⁵ An argument for some such plan was adduced by a few from the fact that Germany had made public certain despatches found at St. Cloud which showed the Emperor

¹ Dec. 14, 1870.

² *Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 15, 1870.

³ *Saunders'*, Dec. 19, 1870.

⁴ *Times*, Dec. 16, 1870; see also *Illustrated London News*, Dec. 17, 1870.

⁵ *Memoirs of Sir Robert Morier*, pp. 238-239.

to have received the assurance of support in the war from all the local authorities.¹ But whether this was an attempt to rehabilitate the Emperor or to increase Prussian hatred against the French nation was, certainly, open to debate. The *News* recorded a rumour that Bismarck was conspiring to use the three hundred and fifty thousand prisoners he held in Germany to effect an Imperial restoration. As a basis for suspicion it cited the publication at Cassel of a pamphlet which the *Allgemeine Zeitung* declared was intended to influence Germany to a tender regard for the Emperor. The British paper noted, too, that those Imperial panegyrics which had been appearing in London in *La Situation* had been copied with approval into the organ of the Prussian Government at Versailles.² Enough of gossip there was to cause "someone higher up," for whose reliability the *Times* stood sponsor, to insert in that paper a denial that any intrigue was being furthered by help from the Empress at Chislehurst.³ *London Society*, believing that if plots were abrewing, England should make her preference known, advocated the Orleanists, and a return of the Comte de Paris. The *Tablet*, just as emphatically, espoused the claims of the Comte de Chambord.⁴ Napoleon, with Luxemburg as lagnappe, had no backers.

Whether the Luxemburg affair was the symptom of a design somewhat deeper or an excrescence caused by irritation at the overlong endurance of France, it remains a mystery why Bismarck should have declared in his Circular that his Government no longer could consider itself bound to any consideration for the Grand Duchy's neutrality, if he

¹ *Saturday Review*, Dec. 10, 1870.

² *Daily News*, Dec. 30, 1870.

³ *Times*, Dec. 26, 1870; see also *Illustrated London News*, Dec. 31, 1870.

⁴ *London Society*, Dec., 1870; *Tablet*, Sept. 17, Oct. 22, 1870.

only meant (as he claimed later)¹ to take precautionary measures of defence against military injury, and had no intention of denouncing the treaty of 1867. The matter appears more obscure when it is noted that this pleasing interpretation of a distinctly contrary declaration was not communicated to Granville by Bernstorff until the second week of February, more than two months after the date of the disturbing Circular. Strangely enough, however, when the Circular was published by the British journals on the twenty-first of December, it was regarded by the public as much less alarming than rumour had represented it.²

In spite of its distinct repudiation of any further regard for Luxemburg's neutrality, many of the British papers viewed it as no more than a minatory declaration designed to frighten the little Duchy into good behavior. The *News* pretended such chagrin at its countrymen's lapse from passivity that it expressed the hope that public opinion would render an apology to the falsely suspected Chancellor.³ Officially, England had shown no agitation, and the public, while not going to the length advised by the *News*, gradually became less vociferous.

While excitement over the affair was at its height, M. Reitlinger, the friend and private secretary of Jules Favre, was granted an interview by Granville and a little later by the Premier. Reitlinger had come from Vienna, where Count Beust had authorized him to say that "if England wished effectively to intervene with the object of obtaining honourable conditions of peace for France, England would not be alone, and Austria would go with her." Reitlinger shrewdly believed that, though the offer had

¹ *Graphic*, Jan. 21, 1871.

² *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 21, 1870, was the first British paper to carry Bismarck's dispatch.

³ *Daily News*, Dec. 24, 1870.

been made in good faith, it had been made in the belief that England would hold aloof. His interview with Granville showed that Beust had been safe in his assumption. There was praise for French "elasticity," but a rebuke for the temerity the Provisional Government had shown in having broken off the armistice negotiations. Lord Granville gave a sympathetic exposition of the difficulties that confronted Prussia because of the lack of a *de jure* government in France. He advised several ingenious, though impracticable, means of obtaining this and hinted that, were it not soon forthcoming, Favre and his associates might incur the responsibility of occasioning an Imperial restoration. In the matter of obtaining an armistice Granville's advice was that France address herself directly to Versailles, though he had no information as to whether or not the Prussians were inclined to negotiate, and would not promise England's good offices in the matter.

In short, M. Reitlinger encountered in London, as he had elsewhere, "an unmeasured fear of being exposed and compromised." Lord Granville assured him that the Cabinet's cautious policy had the approval of the nation. Among the military, he admitted, there was a professional desire for war, and among the working class there were many who favored it; but for the rest, their ideas differed according to their political opinions, and there was no programme on which they wished to unite. The most comfortable words the Minister permitted himself to utter was an intimation that, when the terms of peace came to be discussed, England would consider the time more favorable for intervention.

Gladstone, when interviewed at Hawarden Castle where he was spending the holidays, went a little further and said that England would not agree to any territorial cession. "All he meant," said Reitlinger, "was simply that England did not approve of Prussian annexation of the two pro-

vinces, but that she could do nothing to stop it." After this revelation the Frenchman was very eager to make his way back to Paris and explain away the illusions that existed there as to an intervention. To this end, Granville attempted to get a safe conduct for him from von Bernstorff, but the request was refused.¹

Perhaps the disappointment of the French envoy led him to underestimate the Premier's declaration. On the tenth of December, Gladstone had written Granville that he regretted not having indicated England's opinion on the question of Alsace and Lorraine when the opportunity for doing so had been auspicious. He wished that the Cabinet might arrive at an agreement on the subject before it came up in a practical form. As for himself he said, "I have an apprehension that this violent laceration and transfer is to lead us from bad to worse, and to be the beginning of a new series of European complications."²

No hint of the Reitlinger visit appears in the press. While he was in London, the conditional promise he had won at Vienna was negated by certain proposals of Bismarck's, which promised Austria more solid advantage.³ Lever, the British consul at Trieste, though he knew nothing of these negotiations, wrote that England, in the event of war with Russia, need not count on Austrian assistance. Victory for Austria could be bought only at the price of concessions to Hungary, and defeat would mean for her the loss of her German-speaking provinces. She could risk neither.

The preclusion of Austrian intervention was a happy stroke for Prussia. For on the sixteenth of December when Gran-

¹ Fred. Reitlinger, *A Diplomat's Mission of 1870, passim*; Granville to Lyons, Dec. 14, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 241-242.

² Morley, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, pp. 70-71.

³ Paul Deschanel, *Gambetta*, p. 98.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

ville presented certain proposals of Chaudordy, looking to an armistice for the revictualling of Paris, Bismarck, sure of Russia and Austria, was enabled to refuse them with the greatest degree of confidence. Meetings were still held in London to favour the recognition of the French Republic and to oppose its enemy; but the Ministers were absent from the capital, and the demonstrators had to content themselves with carrying their resolutions to the French embassy.¹ England felt that she had been reduced to a spectator, with a very poor seat at that. She had to watch the successful conclusion of the task the North German Parliament had been created to perform,—the union of North and South Germany. The Confederation, it was understood, only waited on the King's consent to receive a higher dignity before transforming itself into an Empire.²

Across the Atlantic, the American House of Representatives had voted, by a great majority, nearly all those measures hostile to England that had received the President's commendation.³ It was alleged that the Secretary of State for three months had been beset by proposals from the Russian Minister urging a joint demonstration against England.⁴ Mr. Fish, it was stated, had resisted these solicitations. But the fact remained that his country had chosen this time for most incontinently urging a settlement of the Alabama Claims. There existed a suspicion that Prussia, too, encouraged her insistence. Mr. Washburne, who had kept his residence in Paris, was the intermediary between that city and the outside world, through a famous despatch bag which he was allowed to receive and send out weekly.

¹ *Times*, Dec. 19, 1870.

² *Saturday Review*, Dec. 10, 1870.

³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 17, 1870.

⁴ Statement telegraphed from Washington to the *N. Y. Tribune* and quoted in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 17, 1870.

Other diplomats, who had refused to submit to the inspection of their papers, had been brusquely left "incommunicado." The American Minister was also honoured by being the appointed channel of communication between the Government of National Defence and the Prussian leaders at Versailles.¹ A special favor had been granted him by Bismarck in the liberation of a hundred or so of his countrymen who had tired of witnessing the investment. It was claimed, too, that Prussia intended to please America by demanding half of the French fleet for the reduction of British power on the high seas.² All this prepared belief for the *Standard's* story that Prussian despatches had been captured which urged America to press the Alabama claims. Very soon, the news was found to be false.³ But the fact that it, at first, excited alarm is evidence of the suspicions that were tormenting England.

At the same time that the British were annoyed by these rumours, alarming news came to her from across the Channel. The German army had completed its march to the coast and had occupied Havre, Dieppe, and other leading French seaports, greatly to the disadvantage of the British ship owners that had been monopolizing the Havre floating trade. Word came that, not content with flattening John Bull's pocket book, the German leaders were meditating an attack on England so soon as their affairs in France should leave them free for it. For the most part, the proposed invasion was ridiculed. Would their invaders come by balloons, swimming belts, or a channel tunnel? the British asked. Much alarm, however, was pretended by the

¹ *Diary of the Siege of Paris*, published as supplement to *Galignani's Messenger*, 1871; Capt. the Hon. D. Bingham, *Recollections of Paris*, pp. 211-212.

² *Examiner and London Review*, Nov. 5, 1870.

³ *Anglo-American Times*, Jan. 21, 1871.

Standard,¹ and jealous discussions of the Prussian military system were more than ever the vogue in that and other papers. Many urged that England introduce compulsory service and much space was given to pleas that the army be remolded on the Prussian model.²

A fillip to the hopes of the militarists came when, on the twenty-first of December, six British colliers were seized and sunk by Prussian orders off Duclair. The vessels had been sacrificed through the military necessity of forming an obstruction to the activities of French gunboats that had been sailing up and down the Seine, to the menace of German operations at Rouen. On the twenty-fourth, a seventh vessel was seized for the same purpose. According to international law the raid had been executed without any violation of neutral rights. For the colliers, though they had docked and discharged their cargoes by Prussian permission, were subject to the exigencies of a belligerent engaged in active operations of war. But international law, somewhat imperfectly understood at times by its own exponents, is of even more obscurity to the layman.

It is not surprising that the early news of the seizure aroused indignation. It was reported to have been accomplished over the protest of the British captains and with the Union Jack still flying. In France, the papers aggravated irritation by speculating on what the British would do to exact reparation for the owners and to punish the insult to the sailors, who had barely been allowed time to escape.³

¹ *Standard*, Dec. 24, 1870; see also *Globe and Traveller*, Dec. 13, 1870.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 9, 17, 1870; Archibald Forbes, *The Victorious Prussians* in *St. Paul's Magazine*, Dec. 1870, vol. vii, pp. 282 *et seq.*

³ *War Correspondence of the Daily News*, pp. 406-409; Stowell and Munro, *International Cases*, vol. ii, p. 544; Granville's representations to Prussia are summarized in a despatch sent Lyons, Dec. 31, 1870, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 2-3.

The *Weekly Freeman* believed that, even if Granville could "smooth away atrocities and by sweet persuasion bring Bismarck to behave," he still would fail to coo the nation into a contemptible quiescence under insult. At first the British papers bristled almost equally with indignation,¹ but when it became known that the early accounts had been exaggerated, and when the moderate journals had explained the intricacies of international law, the British saw they had not been insulted and became less restive.²

However much interest was diverted during December by the proceedings of the German Parliament, and by the Luxemburg Circular, and the Duclair incident, the focal point of attention remained the beleaguered capital. Its fall was awaited as the signal for the end of war. On September the seventeenth, Lord Lyons and his staff had left for Tours.³ Mr. Wodehouse, the secretary, who had been left in charge of the embassy, somewhat later departed also, under instructions from Lord Granville.⁴ The military attaché, Colonel Claremont, lingered of his own free will for some time,⁵ and, in turn, went off, leaving Sir Edward Blount, a resident banker of Paris, as Great Britain's unofficial representative.⁶ From early December to late January, the sixteen hundred English in the capital were dependent on this kind expatriate and on the overworked Minister of the

¹ *Spectator*, Dec. 31; *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 28, 1870; *Morning Advertiser*, Dec. 28, 1870.

² *Annual Register*, 1871, vol. cxiii, p. 4.

³ *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, p. 176; E. A. Vizetelly, *My Days of Adventure*, pp. 96-97.

⁴ Oxford Graduate, *Inside Paris during the Siege*, pp. 100-101; Whitehurst, *My Private Diary during the Siege of Paris*, vol. i, pp. 252-283.

⁵ Whitehurst, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

⁶ Blount was placed in charge of the embassy as consul on Dec. 10, by Col. Claremont, but he did not receive official appointment until Jan. 24, 1871. Cf. *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, pp. 187-191.

United States. The embassy remained, however, of much interest, because, as the wags said, the Manchester Government was so fittingly represented by four fat and very placid sheep that browsed on the embassy lawn.¹ At Christmas time when the menus were more and more embellished by such items as *chien à la Bismarck*, and *côtelettes d'âne pralinées à la façon de notre Fritz*,² it was not only the British, who came to gaze at the unconscious animals that fattened under extra-territorial rights.

The most famous chefs of Paris tearfully acknowledged their extremity. In times past, some genius of the white cap dressed out a salad so judiciously that his patron declared that with such sauce one could devour his very father with enjoyment. His recipe, alas, was unrecorded, but ingenuity survived. Correspondents wrote that donkey flesh was being so prepared as to have a poultry flavour, and had come to be a tempting delicacy. In the *Athenaeum*, it was stated that the proprietor of those little beasts that once were the delight of the damsels of Paris, who visited Robinson's to dine on fête days with the students in the trees, had become a butcher, and regaled the Quartier Latin with the flesh that had been bestridden with such hilarity in days when Paris went a picnicking.³ From the Jardin des Plantes the elephants were led forth to pay their tribute, too. The Prussians should think of these things, said the *Telegraph*. It would not do to gain the city only to find the cooks starved in their own kitchens, the *table d'hôtes* cut up for firewood, and the stew pans melted into bullets.⁴ The items of the makeshift menus were all very amusing when

¹ Vizetelly, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

² Bingham, *op. cit.*, vol. i, *passim*.

³ *Athenaeum*, Nov. 12, 1870.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 17, 1870.

Henry Labouchere wrote of them in his witty, cynical way.¹ But London grieved that at the Christmas season all Paris had become an *Oliver Twist* that asked for more.

The "Agony Column" of the *Times* was now the peculiar property of French refugees. It was filled with messages to friends, inquiries about the health of the besieged, reproofs for silence.² But most conspicuous among them all, said *Belgravia*, "there became apparent the signs and tokens of the Triumph of Baby. His birth, his progress, his health, his precious teeth, his *faites et gestes*"—were all detailed to gladden the heart of his distant father. Almost you might see *le roi Bébé* clapping his hands and crowing in that column.³ The British wondered, for a time, how the advertisers expected the *Times* to enter Paris in such quantity as to make their efforts at communication practical. But the faith of the refugees was rewarded. "I doubt," said Wickham Hoffman of the American legation, "if you could so hedge in a city that the *Times* would not penetrate it." The great paper entered Paris by pigeon post. Its messages were photographed in microscopic characters and enclosed in a quill, which was fastened longitudinally to the centre feather of one of the "Antwerps," "Dragons," or "Blue Chequers" that were the aerial messengers of the besieged. On its arrival the film was enlarged by a magic lantern, and the messages copied and sent to their different addresses by post-office officials. One bird was said to have brought in no less than fifteen thousand messages for private individuals, besides despatches for the government.

From late in September, when the first postal balloon had carried out its pigeon passengers, the birds had shared with

¹ Henry Labouchere, *Journal of the Besieged Resident* (London, 1871), *passim*.

² *Memoirs of Sir Wemyss Reid* (London, 1905), p. 168.

³ *Belgravia*, Apr., 1871.

the aeronauts the burden of keeping Paris in communication with the world outside. Pictures of the more famous of them were published in British papers and some of their post-marked feathers were brought to London as souvenirs. One of these pigeons, called the "Minister," because of its service to Gambetta, was trained to such intelligence that, it was said, when it fell victim to a Prussian bullet, it exhibited an appropriate spirit of patriotism and promptly swallowed its despatch. Even with those who would not credit such bird stories, the exploits of the feathered messengers played a part in rousing sympathy and admiration.¹

They did not, however, cause any such international complication as did Mr. Washburne's despatch bag. The American Minister, by virtue of his having taken over the representation of the Prussians, possessed the privilege of receiving newspapers and sealed dispatches. He was in the habit of leaving the *Times* and other papers, when they had become somewhat stale, on his library table, and of allowing the curious the privilege of reading them. Certain correspondents, whose eagerness for news was not satisfied by this kindness, learned that later copies were kept by His Excellency concealed under his mattress. It proved not difficult to bribe the chambermaid of the unsuspecting diplomat to show them the *Times* now and again. Their curiosity was not unnatural, for Paris was full of wild rumours of monster meetings in Hyde Park, and threats to dethrone the Queen, and drive Gladstone from office.²

No harm would have come from the peccadillo had not Labouchere, who was at all times irrepressible, shielded the

¹ The fullest accounts appeared directly after the war. Cf. *The Balloon and Pigeon Post*, *Chamber's Journal*, March 4, 1871, pp. 129 *et seq.*; *All the Year Round*, March 10, 1871.

² Bingham, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 211-212.

abigail and slandered the Minister by writing the *News* that copies of the latest London journals were always to be found on Mr. Washburne's table.¹ Very naturally, the matter was made the subject of complaint by Bismarck. Von Moltke found it detrimental to his plans that recent papers should reach the besieged without having been censored by the Prussian authorities. The answer, sent by Mr. Washburne, showed a complete ignorance of the activities of the correspondents but a true estimate of the disesteem in which the French held British journalism. It was charged, he said, that the lugubrious papers were sent him by the Prussians in the hope that their bad news would discourage the besieged.² To avoid further complaints from the French and Prussians, he permitted himself to be deprived of the papers during the last two weeks of December, and when they made their reappearance in his bag he guarded them very strictly.

Parisians must have had the optimism of Gambetta to have derived any aid and comfort from the *Times*. According to Labouchere, they believed it was in the pay of Prussia, and, in official circulars, it was spoken of as the habitual organ of Count Bismarck's policy.³ An Englishman, writing from Paris, said that, had it been corporeal, it would have been mobbed and trampled on a thousand times for the cold sneers and taunts with which it derided the French. "*A bas le Times!*" was a familiar cry in Paris before the day came when all efforts were concentrated on the siege.⁴ British phlegm was found harder to bear than Prussian broadsides. The service rendered the besieged by the

¹ Wickham Hoffman, *Camp, Court and Siege*.

² Letters of Bismarck and Washburne, Dec. 6, 12, 1870, *Washburne Correspondence during the Franco-German War*, pp. 128-129.

³ *Times*, Oct. 19, 1870.

⁴ *All the Year Round*, Sept. 17, 1870; Blanchard Jerrold, *At Home in Paris*, vol. ii, pp. 20-22.

Times's "Agony Column" was not sufficient to counteract the resentment felt at the paper's leaders. The journal of Printing House Square was no more discouraging than other of its contemporaries, but it was more irritating because of its prestige, and for a certain puritannical twang with which it gave its advice.¹ Even the *Standard*, which in London was regarded as markedly pro-French, came in for censure. Certain news culled from it by the editor of *La Verité* by the aid of an American, caused the *Journal Officiel*² to denounce it, also, as "notoriously hostile to France."⁴ Defeat had heightened sensibility.

Whatever kindness entered into the regard of the French for their pacific neighbours was engendered by gratitude for their benefactions. The great sums of money subscribed to the Red Cross through the efforts of Col. Lloyd Lindsay made possible the relief of hundreds of the sick and wounded.³ Within Paris itself, scores were aided by the generosity of Richard Wallace, to whom the fortune of the eccentric Lord Hertford had been bequeathed.⁴ From London money was forwarded by the French Benevolent Society, the Ladies' Committee, and many organizations that devoted themselves to the assistance of special groups. The journals were liberal of their space in soliciting aid for the sick and wounded, and in advertising charity bazaars and concerts.

A fund receiving much publicity, was that sponsored by Lord Vernon to enable French agriculturists to prepare the next year's harvest. Its directors had the good fortune to secure the assistance, in their efforts, of the well beloved Père Hyacinthe, who lectured for its benefit on the twen-

¹ Bingham, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 147; *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 13, 1870.

² Oxford Graduate, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-3, 81-82.

³ Whitehurst, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 231.

tieth of December in the Queen's Concert Rooms in Hanover Square. The *News* records that the pavements in front of the famous old Rooms were thronged for the best part of an hour, so that the scene resembled the entrance to the pit of a theatre on a first night.¹ At the stairs a phalanx of policemen mounted guard, and a hand-to-hand scramble took place between the men in blue and those in broadcloth. The *Telegraph* records that Victorian matrons forgot their decorum, and screamed, and plunged their stiff taffetas into the *melée*.²

Those who won to the inside were well rewarded by the simple, earnest words of the excommunicated Carmelite. At a time when nationalism was running riot, he was able to speak of Germany without rancour and of France without undue laudation. He saw no inherent necessity for war. In spite of diversities of language, of temperament, of culture, he insisted that the essential unity of races under one common Father was still the natural and normal destiny. His own country, he believed, had offended in previous times, as Germany offended now, against that common sense which urged one to encourage, rather than resent, the strength and unity of neighbouring nations. As for the future of France, he could not believe that the mere possession of two provinces was so essential to her greatness that their loss would forfeit her high estate. Nor did he think their gain by Germany would be such surety against aggression as would derive from moderation. He had faith in the gratitude of nations. The two provinces, he said, should be left as a bond of union between two neighbours. They were the hand—almost he might say the heart—of Germany, reposing affectionately in the hand and heart of France.³

¹ *Daily News*, Dec. 21, 1870.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 21, 1870.

³ *Saturday Review*, Dec. 24, 1870; *Father Hyacinthe*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, March, 1871, vol. xxiii, pp. 401 *et seq.*; *Morning Post*, Dec. 21, 1870.

There were some, no doubt, who went away from the crowded concert room to say their Christmas prayers for those "in danger, necessity, and tribulation," with a truer sense of the cause of danger, and the necessity of preventing it, and how best tribulation could be avoided.

Among these, as well as among their fellows, who still saw darkly only into the immediate future, there was great fear of a bombardment. For the present, it meant horror; for the future, still greater horror,—bred, as it would be, from mutual hate engendered by injustice given and received. "Paris will not be besieged," the British had said, when the Prussians began their march to that capital. Such an event, said the *Times*, would be an anomaly in civilization, a catastrophe throughout Europe.¹ The *News* declared that for Paris to offer itself to useless siege for the sake of a supposed point of honour would be as much an anachronism as for King William to bind the Emperor to his triumphal car.² One of the editors of the *Leed's Mercury* was passionately angry that the French cut down the woods around the city, which might have afforded shelter to the enemy. He considered that they were destroying the property of the world from childish fear.³ When it was known that Paris was really invested, men comforted themselves that the siege would be brief.⁴ They believed her walls would fall, like those of Jericho, at the first blast of the enemy's trumpets. A few there were, like Edward Fitzgerald, who were even willing that the gay and carnival part of Paris should suffer, in order that the French might be reduced to sobriety while they rebuilt it.⁵

¹ *Times*, Aug. 26, 27, 1870; *The Invasion of France*, *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1871, pp. 122 *et seq.*

² *Daily News*, Aug. 25, 1870.

³ *Memoirs of Sir Wemyss Reid*, p. 167.

⁴ *Economist*, Sept. 10, 1870.

⁵ Edward Fitzgerald, *Letters and Literary Remains of*, vol. ii, pp. 302-303.

When, week after week, the city still endured, they were reluctant in England to render her a meed of praise. "Paris throughout has been herself," they said,

half drunk, half inspired, capable of any crime, of any heroism, no figure for the good to admire, yet always leaving the suggestion that in her wickedness, as in her greatness, there is a trace of a being who is in some mysterious way beyond or beneath the laws to which we mortals yield.¹

It was not until men knew hunger was taking toll in the city and that the end was not far off, that they ceased regarding it as the abstract of all the vices and the beauties. Then they took thought for the Parisians, and for the British that were within the gates.

Bismarck was in a quandary—vexed at the city's obstinacy and fearful to rouse indignation by resorting to a bombardment. The resistance of the provinces was daily making it more necessary to free for other work the two hundred thousand that invested it. According to Archibald Forbes, the German impression up to the middle of December was that the siege would soon be over. Bismarck and von Moltke had been deceived as to the store of provisions within the walls. They were eager to repair their miscalculations by a bombardment;² but the Crown Prince and his staff, and the commander of the siege artillery, held to the early plan.³ Their opinion, Bismarck believed, was due to a wretched regard for principles of humanity. "From London," he complained, "representations were received in our most influential circles to the effect that the capitulation of Paris might not be brought about by bom-

¹ *Spectator*.

² Archibald Forbes, *My Experiences of the War between France and Germany*, vol. ii, pp. 70-71.

³ Karl Abel, *Letters on International Relations of 1870*, vol. ii, pp. 433-434.

bardment, but only by hunger." He was impatient of this English "cant," and frankly suspicious that it was a subterfuge designed to rob him of the fruits of victory. Delay, he knew, was dangerous.¹

The *Examiner* told the English that the German troops and people, too, were tired of war, tired of the monotony of the siege, tired of caring for the three hundred thousand prisoners that had to be provided for in German towns. They pitied Paris,² but this did not prevent them from insisting that vigorous proceedings be taken against it. Even the University of Göttingen and other learned bodies, which Trinity College of Dublin appealed to, contented themselves with tincturing an unfavorable reply with piety.³ They wanted the war to end. Bismarck wrote that he was tormented by the apprehension that Germany's interests might be severely injured through hesitation and delay. He was increasingly impatient of the "female influences," which set themselves against him; at the ladies of great courts, who glorified the English catchwords of humanity and civilization. He was convinced of the necessity of withstanding them, and settling with France before delay allowed the Neutrals to unite in an understanding on the forthcoming peace.⁴ In attempting to avoid this eventually, he knew he would have to resort to an expedient so unpopular that it might precipitate the very accord it was designed to prevent. It was alarmingly significant when Russell, whose Prussian sympathies had been well known, asked that his successor be sent out by the *Times*, so that he might return without witnessing the bombardment. He was induced to stay by Delane, who wrote, mysteriously, that he had been

¹ Bismarck, *The Man and the Statesman*, vol. ii, pp. 124-125.

² *Examiner*, Dec. 17, 1870.

³ *Spectator*, Dec. 24, 1870.

⁴ Bismarck, *The Man and the Statesman*, vol. ii, pp. 113, 121.

assured from the beginning that the dreaded contingency would not take place.¹

Regard for British susceptibilities induced Bismarck to show himself very amenable in the affair of the colliers sunk off Duclair,² and to delay bringing the siege guns into action until the flames had died away from Christmas puddings that decked the tables of London town. But on the twenty-sixth of December, the bombardment was begun of Mount Avron, an eminence on the east side of Paris;³ and while the children in England were still clapping their hands at the pantomimes, their parents began to fear for the sixteen hundred British that were immured within the walls. Russell, whom the King of Prussia had called the Minister of Public Opinion, realized that he had been tricked into continuing to countenance the German operations through the deception practised on his chief. Like the good newspaper man that he was, he did not show himself disgruntled. But he was very tired of the "grand but uneasy atmosphere of Versailles;" tired of being pumped by Bismarck; of hearing his country sneered at by stripling subalterns. More than ever, he was sure that when France went down, England would lose her only ally,—an ally whom she had much to forgive, and from whom she had much to endure, but who, after all, would have continued constant.⁴

¹ J. B. Atkins, *Life of Sir W. H. Russell*, vol. ii, p. 203.

² *Annual Register* for 1871, vol. cxiii, p. 4.

³ *Times*, Dec. 30, 1870.

⁴ J. B. Atkins, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 227-228.

CHAPTER XIV

“PEACE AT ANY PRICE”

THE British lion, in the early days of 1871, was in a most unenviable condition. *Judy* represented him as caged, and masked with the dolorous face of Gladstone. From without, he was being baited by Bismarck, who prodded him with the Berlin press, and by Russia, who had just flung at him a batch of treaties. Uncle Sam was shown waiting his turn to join in the torment by poking at him the Alabama Claims. The lion was gazing at some broken ships that lay in the corner of his cage. Someone had scratched from the wall the legend, “*Dieu et mon Droit*,” and substituted, “Shop Forever!”¹ That the lion was peacefully, if sadly, experiencing the safety provided by isolation, Ruskin declared was due to two bad reasons. The noble beast had not sense enough to determine in a great national quarrel which side was right, nor courage enough to defend the right, could he have discerned it,—“being on this first of January, 1871, in much bodily fear; that is to say, afraid of the Russians, afraid of the Prussians, afraid of the Americans, afraid of the Hindoos, afraid of the Chinese, afraid of the Japanese, afraid of the New Zealanders, and afraid of the Caffirs.”²

Things having come to such a pass, the *Dublin Mail* could not confine its rebukes to Gladstone and Granville; for, though it viewed them as “poor, pusillanimous whipsters,”

¹ *Judy*, Jan. 4, 1871.

² Ruskin, *Complete Works*, vol. xxvii, pp. 11-12.

it conceded that they did no more than show "the very age and body of the time."¹ The *Quarterly*, due to Salisbury's influence, laid all the blame on the Ministry's policy of retrenchment. It prophesied that, unless a change were made, the day would come when England would collapse as completely as had France.² The *Court Journal* accused the Government of having inculcated the principle of cowardice under the soft words of "peace at any price."³ Even the *Edinburgh*, which had rendered much service in upholding the Ministry's hands in times past, was giving warning that the destruction of French power would mean the loss of a large part of British influence on the Continent.⁴ In the *Times*, passivity was rebuked by a statement that, with Paris actually under fire, one wise and good man of high public character, if he spoke for a neutral nation, might yet be listened to by both belligerents. But nothing of this kind was excepted now from an Englishman. "You Englis'," said a well known Italian editor, "You Englis' are so damn happy, you will do not'ing for nobody."⁵

The British were very impatient that Gladstone's statement of the case for "Happy England" seemed in Europe to have been regarded as a national utterance. The *Economist* voiced a common wish when it desired that, if the Government was committed to a policy of inactivity, it might still say something about the war that every one could make his own. It believed that if the public was given nothing more "magic and memorable," officially, than the

¹ *Dublin Evening Mail*, Jan. 2, 1871.

² *Lessons of the War, Invasion of France, Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1871; cf. *Economist*, Jan. 28, 1871.

³ *Court Journal*, Jan. 7, 1871.

⁴ *Edinburgh Review*, Jan., 1871.

⁵ Letter of Versailles Correspondent, Jan. 9, 1871; *Spectator*, Jan. 17, 1871.

phrases of Granville's despatches, the Cabinet would face the February sessions with slight popular support. Its salvation lay only in the presumable weakness of the Opposition.¹ The *Spectator* regretted that Gladstone did not yield to the popular demand by adding to his pacific Ministry someone possessed of a more rugged resolution than was apparent among its present members. Bright's resignation late in December would have seemed to clear the way for this. But the opportunity was not approved. The transference to the Irish Secretaryship of Lord Hartington, and the removal of Mr. Fortescue to the Board of Trade effected no such reformation as would ensure a strong war administration and a more liberal sympathy in Foreign Affairs.² England had ceased to preach sermons to France on the war's disasters, and was increasingly eager to apply its lessons to herself. But on the face of her diplomacy, the change was not apparent.

On January the fourth, the bombardment of Paris was begun without notice to the besieged. The members of the Diplomatic Corps within the city at once prepared a protest to Count Bismarck. It was observed that due notice should have been given of the intention to shell the city, so that diplomats and neutrals might have withdrawn, and the citizens have provided better protection for children and the sick. The Chancellor was asked to make some amends for his precipitancy by permitting neutrals to place themselves and their property in safety.³ The note went to Bismarck without the signature of any English official,—not even that of a vice-consul's under secretary, as Felix Whitehurst put it.⁴ Sir Edward Blount, who had been represent-

¹ *Economist*, Jan. 7, 1871.

² *Spectator*, Jan. 7, 1871.

³ Bingham, *Recollections of Paris*, vol. i, pp. 299-300.

⁴ Whitehurst, *My Private Diary during the Siege of Paris*, vol. ii, p. 231.

ing as best he could the many besieged English, regretted that he was placed in a false position by his lack of authority. The absence of England's signature, he said, had produced a painful effect.¹ On the twenty-third, when the Swiss Minister, acting for the Diplomatic Corps, sent a second communication to Bismarck, Sir Edward was still unable to give it England's sanction.² Lyons had written to Granville of his uneasiness for the English left in the place,³ but, no more from London than from Paris, was any representation made on behalf of the immured British.

Indignation over the bombardment and fear for the expatriates was heightened when news came to England that churches, schools, asylums, and hospitals were being made the particular targets of Prussian bullets. At first, Blount would not believe this, but soon his diary was saddened by notices of the damage done,—he came to believe intentionally,—on St. Sulpice, the Pitié Hospital, and the Parthenon.⁴ *Fun*, under the caption of "German Imperial Charity," presented a picture of bombs, which it described as "contributions to the hospitals, ambulance, etc., of Paris."⁵ The *Manchester Guardian*, recalling the conduct of the invaders at Strasburg and Bazeilles, believed the slaughter of civilians in Paris was simply a further application of the system of terror that before had been found efficacious.⁶

On the second day of the bombardment, a meeting, large, and as the press described it "promiscuous" and "miscellan-

¹ *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, p. 200.

² Stowell and Munro, *International Cases*, vol. ii, pp. 112-114.

³ Newton, *Lord Lyons*, vol. i, pp. 356-357.

⁴ *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, pp. 200-201; *John Bull*, Jan. 21, 1871.

⁵ *Fun*, Jan. 14, 1871.

⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, Jan. 16, 1871.

eous," was held in Cannon Street Hall, London, to urge on the Government the urgency of recognizing the French Republic, and of giving it active support. Mr. Merriman, Sir Henry Hoare and others spoke, and aroused such enthusiasm as to win hostile notice from the press. That the journals viewed the meeting askance was due to the belief that its organizers were animated, not so much by a too ardent sympathy, as by a desire to stir the working class to a demand for a republic in Great Britain.¹ As a result, however, of the bellicose spirit of its resolutions, the Council of the Workingmen's National Peace Society issued a series of questions that it advised each individual to ask himself before he should cast public vote in favour of war. John Ruskin was one of those who aided the Council in its endeavours.²

Another meeting was held on the same night at a hall in Old Street, and presided over by Charles Bradlaugh.³ Whatever British workingmen did under his leadership, was sure to be regarded even more suspiciously than what they might be induced to do by the advanced Liberals and the Comtists. The more active did such guidance as his appear to be, the more certain was it that the coming Parliament would find neither party eager to give armed support to France. There were many who were glad of this. John Stuart Mill was one. He regretted that the political leaders of the working classes had been led away by the Comtists and by the mere name of a republic into wishing to give armed support to a Government, which, he believed, dreaded to face any popular representation. The peasantry, he thought, were being forced to fight through sheer fear of

¹ *Spectator*, *Standard*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily News*, issues of Jan. 7, 1871.

² Ruskin, *Complete Works*, vol. xxviii, pp. 26-27.

³ *Saturday Review*, Jan. 7, 1871.

being punished by those who had elevated themselves to power.¹

But for France, irrespective of her Government, there was whole-hearted sympathy in all of England. On January the sixth, an artists' exhibition, held at the Suffolk Street Galleries, gave such an opportunity for a demonstration of friendliness as did not exact a simultaneous confession of radicalism. The art journals recorded that it was attended by much greater crowds than had gone to a previous exhibition held for the relief of destitute German orphans. The group of Pre-Raphaelites then prominent in England greatly admired the young artist, Henri Regnault, who had waived his exemption from service and within a fortnight was to keep a rendezvous with death. D'Aubigny, the friend of George Eliot, was in England at the time. Meissonier, the painter of battles; Gustave Doré; Victor Giraud, who had three salon prizes to his credit; the realist Courbet; Puvis de Chavannes, were some of those whose works enriched the exhibition. Even its catalogue now would prove enthralling to connoisseurs. British artists very eagerly contributed their work, also, to assist France, and such collectors as the Duke of Wellington, the Marquis of Lansdowne, and Miss Burdett-Coutts stripped their galleries of their dearest treasures to join with them. Towards the middle of the month, the Lord Mayor's Fund for the relief of the noncombatants in the environs of Paris afforded another innocuous method by which a respectable Briton could discreetly show his sympathy for France.²

Irritation at Prussia was being augmented by certain verbal bombs which she let fly at England during the progress of the siege. On January the sixth, the *Times* re-

¹ *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, vol. ii, pp. 292 et seq.

² *Art, Pictorial and Industrial*, Jan., 1871, pp. 152-153; *Athenaeum*, Jan. 7, 1871, p. 25; *Times*, Jan. 17, 1871.

ported that the *Moniteur* of Versailles, "a French journal possessed of a German spirit, and pursuing German ends under a French disguise," announced that the only part left for England to play was that of effacing herself. In maintaining his contention, the writer examined critically the British military system and pronounced its condition quite hopeless. No matter how strongly the Tories of the *Standard* and the *Quarterly* might have enunciated the same opinion, after they themselves had reviewed the mistakes of Mr. Cardwell, they lost their party attitude of criticism and became sputtering Britishers as soon as victorious foreigners sneered at their army.

To still their resentment, the *Times* was informed very promptly that the irritating article had not possessed the official authority which its publication in the *Moniteur* had seemed to argue.¹ But that measurements were still being taken for John Bull's shroud, appeared from the fine plans for invasion which young officers were making at Versailles and Orleans.² Disraeli, who believed it would be fatal for his party to adopt an anti-German policy, was fearful that his fellow Tories, in their zeal for repairing the country's defences, would be led to make a bogey of victorious Germany.³ David Urquhart, on the other hand, found a certain satisfaction in the fact that Lord Derby busied himself with calculations as to the number of men von Moltke would need to conquer England. For a long time he had been preaching that Prussia was the agent with which Russia intended to avenge the Crimea.⁴ The man of anomalies found himself at ease now that England, also, was suspicious.

¹ *Times*, Jan. 12, 1871.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 4, 1871; *Invasion of France*, *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1871, pp. 122 *et seq.*

³ Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, vol. v.

⁴ *Diplomatic Review*, Jan., 1871.

Day by day, the papers showed themselves more critical of Prussia's conduct. When German headquarters at Versailles misquoted an official French document in order to assert that the Provisional Government was offering a bounty to any imprisoned officer who would break his parole and escape, the *Spectator* branded the charge as a deliberate and dishonorable falsehood.¹ British papers reprinted the French offer, which specifically excepted from its provisions those officers who had made any sort of agreement with the Germans. When the accusation was later embodied in a circular and coupled with an attack on France for alleged breaches of the Geneva Conventions, it was again condemned as false by the British press, and the cited violations against the Red Cross were discounted as being unaccompanied by proof. Bismarck was criticised, moreover, for having couched his charges in insolent phrases that compared badly with the courteous tone of the Chaudordy Circular. "So far," said the *Scotsman*, "as the tone and tendency of Count Bismarck's dispatch can be regarded as an indication of the national character of which he says so much, they would show the Germans incapable of any mercy towards those who might be under their feet."²

A war correspondent of the *News*, while claiming that, as a rule, the French "religiously respected" the Geneva flag, admitted that there were too often grounds for their suspecting it when it flew from the German lines. For the French had found their adversaries full of tricks. One of these was to shelter their operations under its care. To quote directly: "The chiefs of an army would not sanction such a use to it; but an army is made up of units and companies . . . and these units and small companies, when detached, will be found to possess in diverse degrees the

¹ *Spectator*, Jan. 7, 1871.

² *Weekly Scotsman*, Jan. 21, 1871.

sentiment of honour. Various detachments have been known to seek for success by unworthy wiles, as for example, by holding their muskets butt-end upwards, in sign of surrender, when they had no intention of surrendering . . . and others have been known to shelter themselves from attack by hoisting the Red Cross on posts when they wished to make themselves comfortable.”¹

C. Allanson Winn, who accompanied General von Göben's corps throughout the campaign and expressed in his early letters much admiration for the victors, wrote in January that the Prussian Army had greatly deteriorated, both in system and morale. It had come to conduct itself in a manner “worthy of the Imperialists of the Thirty Years War.” Among other of his charges, he claimed that at Metz and other towns the Prussians had violated international law by compelling the civilian inhabitants to construct rifle pits and earthworks.² The more famous correspondent of the *Times*, Mr. Russell, wrote regretfully from Versailles of the inexplicable harshness of the German prefect there. M. Rameau, the mayor, who earlier in the war had been courteously received by Bismarck, had been placed in a cell in a common prison, where he was “ill nearly to death.” Three members of his Council had also been imprisoned. The charge was that they had refused to pay the fine imposed for their not having opened a store of groceries on a certain day. The supplies for the store, which had been bought in Germany, had not reached Versailles, because the German authorities had refused to allow them to be conveyed thither by the French railways. One could not make bricks without straw, observed the *Spectator*, even though ordered to do so by a German prefect.³

¹ *Daily News*, Jan. 16, 1871.

² *What I Saw of the War*, *Athenaeum*, Jan. 7, 1871, pp. 11 *et seq.*

³ *Spectator*, Jan. 7, 1871.

Another matter, which incurred the disfavour of the British, was the increasing confiscation of property by "requisitions." An English doctor with the German army described it as a pretty way of borrowing without payment. The Bavarians, he said, by grace of it, swept the villages of everything. "They remind one always of a visitation of locusts. One meets them on the road to Paris with a couple of champagne bottles slung at each side. If one goes south there are more Bavarians, if one goes north, there they are again."¹

It was these accounts of the changed character of the German conduct that made the British very ready to laugh at the telegraphic news that *Judy* claimed to have intercepted for their enlightenment. Early in January, it published the following:

"Today a short but violent attack of the enemy was made on the five hundredth division, which being reënforced by the Duke of Muckbigstuck with the nine hundredth division, captured the whole of the French Army of the Loire and other places, with the exception of one chasseur and a drummer boy, who have since entrenched themselves and now threaten our right wing. As yet they haven't done much. Providence with us, as usual."

"The enemy violently attacked us yesterday in enormous force, but was victoriously repulsed by the two hundred and forty-ninth division of the Mucklehumburgers of the Guard, and pursued as far as the clouds, to which they had carried off their heavy artillery in balloons. A few thousand prisoners fell into our hands, together with three bottles of *vin ordinaire* and a corkscrew. Our losses are one spiked helmet and a coloured clay pipe. Providence is clearly on our side."

But though *Judy* thus followed the policy of her con-

¹ *In the Field with the Prussians, Paris and the War, All the Year Round*, Jan. 14, 1871, on German reprisals. Cf. Humphrey Sandwith, *The War and the Ambulance, Macmillan's Magazine*, Nov., 1870, pp. 38 et seq.; Archibald Forbes, *My Experience of the War between France and Germany*, p. 259; *Temple Bar*, Sept. 5, 1870; *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

temporaries, *Punch* and *Fun*, in transferring her sympathy to France, and a change in the leaders of the more serious papers was easily noticeable, it must not be supposed that Germany was left without sympathizers. That country's defenders were many, and they were strengthened at this time by Bismarck's admirable attitude in the matter of the Duclair incident. On January the ninth, the Foreign Office was reassured by a communication from the Chancellor which admitted the claim of the British ship owners to indemnification, and promised to reimburse them as soon as their losses could be equitably estimated.¹ From Versailles, Odo Russell wrote that Bismarck had gracefully waived the question of the merits of the case, because he valued the friendship and good will of England too highly to endanger it by accepting the exonerating decision of his law officers.² The *Spectator* was happy to find that he had shown himself so reasonable in the matter and regretted that many bellicose British had attempted to use a petty incident to coerce the Government into a change of policy. The *Saturday Review* praised the Count's despatch for its courtesy and found its content perfectly satisfactory to the British claims.³

This display of amenity on the part of Bismarck may have tempered, somewhat, the reception that was accorded to certain efforts made at this time to regain sympathy by a restatement of the German case. The *Fortnightly Review*, then current, contained noteworthy articles by Professor von Sybel and Karl Blind, both of whom attempted to show that German supremacy would, truly, be an advantage to Europe. The *News* was sceptical. It saw more grounds for hope in

¹ Bismarck to Bernstorff, Jan. 8, 1871; *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxii, p. 5.

² Odo Russell to Granville, Jan. 8, 1871; *ibid.*, vol. lxxi, p. 6. Cf. Stowell and Munro, *International Cases*, vol. ii, pp. 548-549.

³ Issues of Jan. 14, 1871.

the French Republic, now battling so valiantly, than it did in the prospective German Empire. The first could only perplex despotic monarchs with a fear of change; the second might be expected to sit like a nightmare on the liberal aspirations of the world.¹

Of more importance than the articles in magazines, was a pamphlet collection of letters on the war by Mommsen, Strauss, Max Müller, and Carlyle.² It was not new material. The letters of Carlyle already had been widely commented on, as had those written by Professor Müller in his controversy with the famous "Scrutator," Count Gasparin. But their appearance within the same cover afforded a very valuable and succinct statement of the German case. The *Daily Telegraph* summed up their joint pleadings as falling under the heads of ethical, strategical, and penal arguments for the rightness of success. As for the ethical reason for the transfer of Alsace and Lorraine to Germany, the *Telegraph* declared that plain English common sense, uninspired by the ultra-Kantish mysticism of modern Germany, could not understand the sacredness, or even the logic, of the "obligation" which the conquerors claimed impelled them to annex a population so passionately French as to show a murderous antipathy for its self-appointed benefactors. In regard to the strategic argument, the *Telegraph* submitted that it had been greatly weakened by the creation of a powerful Teutonic state, and urged that German strategists, in conjunction with neutrals, direct the Empire to a readjustment of its claims. The punitive argument was dismissed as representing a vindictiveness incompatible with civilization. Nor could her claims in this respect be salutary for herself. A permanent humiliation, the *Telegraph* believed, would be

¹ *Daily News*, Jan. 5, 1871.

² T. Mommsen, D. F. Strauss, F. Max Müller, T. Carlyle, *Letters on the War between Germany and France* (London, 1871).

a perpetual provocation to hostility, rather than a guarantee of peace.¹

The fact that arguments which could not be esteemed by the English were thus presented by Germans, from whom the most exalted opinions were expected, was disheartening. George Eliot wrote that she was pained to find the educated voices had not a higher moral tone about national and international duties and prospects. But then, she added, no people can carry on a long war without being brutalized by it.² Meredith, too, noted the dangerous exaltation of Germany's defenders. "One smells," he said, "the cognac of victory." He admired the German at all times, but he admired France, too, and never more than in defeat.³ The *Fortnightly*, that carried von Sybl's defence of the Fatherland, was enriched by a soaring ode in which Meredith praised the unconquerable spirit of France.⁴

A fugitive, but not inaccurate, gage of public opinion during this month was afforded by the activities of Parliamentarians in the provinces. It behooved honourable members, even more than it did editors, to show a meticulous regard for the public's sympathies. The near approach of the sessions was a stimulus, too, to all those ex-officio orators who were accustomed to speak with excessive shrillness and persistence because they knew they must remain without the walls. A notable meeting, held on the tenth at St. James's Hall, afforded an auspicious opportunity for speakers to outline for absent Parliamentarians the course that they were desired to pursue. It was organized by a few Positivists and their political allies, without the aid of a

¹ *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 28, 1871.

² George Eliot, *Complete Works* (Life and Letters), p. 555.

³ Meredith to Capt. Maxse, Jan. 3, 1871, *Letters of George Meredith*, vol. i, p. 222.

⁴ Meredith, *France, 1870*, *Fortnightly*, Jan. 1, 1871, vol. xv, pp. 87-94.

single member from either House. Professor Beesly was the chairman. Among the speakers were Captain Maxse (who served Meredith for the hero of *Beauchamp's Career*), and Sir William Marriott—both of whom were looking out for Radical seats; Mr. Bradlaugh, who later occupied one after a spirited physical and legal contest with those members that were unwilling to admit an atheist; Mr. Odger, whom the papers described as a professional agitator; and Mr. Frederic Harrison, whose *Bismarckism*, reprinted in pamphlet form, was having a tremendous sale.

"The meeting," according to Harrison's *Memoirs*, "was as hotly bellicose as could be imagined." The hall was crowded, and the audience contested with the speakers the privilege of being vociferous. It was resolved that the Government should be urged to ascertain from Germany the terms on which peace could be made; and that, in the event that a cession of French territory was demanded, England should call on the neutral Powers to join with her in resisting it. An attempt was made by some of the more pacific to amend the motion by declaring against intervention. But this was shouted down. No one dared to offer for consideration the printed list of proposals that had been prepared by the Peace Party. Every allusion to Republicanism was cheered to the echo, and Gladstone was condemned in forceful language for having failed to recognize the Government of France.¹

The ardour of the meeting proved alarming to the British press. In an attempt at comfort, the *Globe* maintained that though the hall was crowded, it still had held only "a minute proportion of the workingmen of London," and that the "better class" of this substratum of British society had remained away.² The *Spectator* believed that the ambition

¹ *Examiner*, Jan. 14, 1871; *Times*, Jan. 11, 1871; Frederic Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs*, vol. ii, p. 15.

² *Globe and Traveller*, Jan. 12, 1871.

of the friends of France to influence the Government had o'erleaped itself to its own injury. The *Economist*, after an elaborate analysis of the condition of public opinion, denounced the meeting as being misrepresentative of the wishes of the majority. "Nobody could think for a moment," it declared, "that Professor Beesly, and Mr. Frederic Harrison, and Mr. Congreve are in any sense exponents of a large section of English society. So far as we have any knowledge of the middle class, we should say that these gentlemen's sympathies are often a very fair measure of the antipathies of the greater portion of that class." They were rather, thought the *Economist*, the exponents of the agitators among the trades unions, and of that political section of the working class which the last election had shown to be small.¹ But even those journals that depreciated the importance of the meeting at St. James's Hall were willing to make of the occasion a text for a discourse to the Ministry on its unpopularity. Such meetings as this, they said, would have provided a valuable lesson for any premier capable of rising to the conception of a foreign policy. Gladstone was not such a one. He was a chairman of a vestry grown to colossal proportions, and could not change his qualities.²

A meeting of the Prime Minister's constituents, held at Greenwich at about the same time as the London meeting, gave evidence, more startling, of the discontent he had aroused. Resolutions were prepared and read, declaring that the electors had ceased to have confidence either in his home or his foreign policy, and demanding a restoration of that parliamentary trust, which in an "unguarded and evil hour," had been committed to his care. Such confusion resulted that the resolutions could not be submitted to a vote.

¹ *Spectator* and *Economist*, issues of Jan. 14, 1871.

² Jan. 28, 1871; *Standard*, Jan. 12, 1871.

A show of hands, however, was accepted as an indication that Greenwich was still willing to be represented by the Prime Minister, and the meeting was hastily adjourned. Such public evidence of dissatisfaction among the constituency that two years before had chosen him its representative, certainly, did nothing to fortify his waning power.¹

The explanation given was that the meeting had been swayed by a local grievance, incidental to the policy of isolation and disarmament. Among the dockyards closed by the First Lord of the admiralty had been the one at Deptford, which had given much employment to the citizens of Greenwich. Discontent at the resulting hardships had been keen,² and Mr. Gladstone had not chosen to allay it by following the example of lesser Parliamentarians, who courted their constituents with seasonable speeches. He had disregarded, alike, the power of words and the influence of the pocket book. Not until the coming sessions could the mistake be repaired. Edward Bulwer, in a letter to his son, recorded that the Government was "terribly out of favour with all parties, and Gladstone distrusted and almost despised." He believed, however, that when Parliament opened, a few speeches might bolster up the Cabinet until those dampers, the taxes, could moderate the growing ardour for defense and European prestige.³

Sir Charles Dilke was winning applause at Chelsea by scoring the Government for withholding recognition from the French Republic, and for doing nothing to prevent the loss of territory.⁴ The Member for Bradford, Mr. For-

¹ *Saunders'*, Jan. 11; *Economist*, Jan. 21, 1871.

² Spencer Walpole, *History of Twenty-five Years*, vol. ii, pp. 117-118.

³ Bulwer to Owen Meredith, Jan. 29, 1871, second Earl of Lytton, *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of Edward Bulwer, First Lord Lytton* (N. Y., 1883), vol. ii, p. 477.

⁴ *Spectator*, Jan. 14, 1871.

ster, was treated to a vehement manifestation of discontent when he endeavoured a defence of the Governmental policy.¹ Sir Henry Hoare, however, on attempting to win in the provinces that agreement to an active French alliance, which he had often heard acclaimed in London, was forced to acknowledge a failure.² The critics of the Government, when they ranged afield, missed the support of pauperism, that in the capital provided a second for any motion expressing discontent and giving promise of employment.

Mr. Bradlaugh, and Mr. Odger, before audiences which the *Times* described as made up of the class that followed them, continued to protest, *ad libitum*, against the pro-Prussian tendency of the Government and sometimes adjourned their meetings with loud groans for the German Army, the King, and Count Bismarck.³ The Catechism for Intervention was well thumbed in the Capital, in spite of the activities of the Metropolitan Peace Party;⁴ and those who quoted it had the satisfaction of seeing their attempts at oratory treated with unaccustomed respect by Tory papers.⁵ Liberals were alarmed at the widening breach between the Government and the Radicals.⁶ They were convinced that the alliance could last no longer than the period of tension which was being caused by an exceptional situation. But the matter was particularly regrettable because diplomats were expected soon to assemble for the discussion of the Black Sea matter. It was hoped that while their sessions were in progress there would occur no flagrant indication of the Government's unpopularity.

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Jan. 18, 1871; *Spectator*, Jan. 21, 1871.

² *Spectator*, Jan. 14, 1871.

³ *Times*, Jan. 13, 1871.

⁴ *The Mail*, Jan. 13, 1871.

⁵ Cf. *Weekly Scotsman*, Jan. 14, 1871.

⁶ *Globe and Traveller*, Jan. 5, 1871.

Fortunately for the Liberals, the event of the Conference provided such a test for the new political alliance as they had longed for. It had been extensively remarked that Conservatives' sympathy had been much strained, because their new allies in the demand for a policy of increased armament and active intervention were even more vociferous in their enthusiasm for republicanism. Trouble was foreseen when it became rumoured in London that Jules Favre, who more than anyone at that time was representative of this principle, would represent France at the Conference. M. Favre, as delegate of France, would have been welcomed by the Tories right heartily; M. Favre, as the exponent of those theories with which former French Republics had alarmed their neighbors, might be expected to carry in his brief case the bomb of international revolution. The Trades Unions and the great Benefit Societies formed the project of welcoming him by a tremendous ovation. According to the *Spectator*, it appeared that the reception was to be as imposing and spectacular as a former one tendered to Garibaldi.¹ The Irish were to turn out to a man. In every possible way the demonstrators were to express their sympathy for France and their indignation that its Government had not been recognized. The "Jules Favre Demonstration Committee" planned incessantly, and its work was detailed to meetings that expressed approval by liberal subscriptions. There was a certain flamboyance about the project that caused Conservatives to shake their heads. In the procession Mr. Odger was arranging, there was to be carried a Union Jack muddied with foot-prints to recall the insults that were supposed to have been put upon it at Duclair. Close by was to be carried a legend, describing it as "the flag that braved a thousand years," and another,

¹ *Spectator*, Jan. 14, 1871.

with the declaration that "Britannia rules the waves." In the vanguard were to march uniformed Volunteers, to show that it was through no want of enthusiasm in the army that England held aloof.¹ But the Government decisively vetoed this last plan and ignored the protests that Volunteers should enjoy civilians' rights except when the country was about to be invaded.²

In spite of these finely elaborated plans, there was no parade on the appointed day. The seventeenth of January saw diplomats from Prussia, Austria, Turkey, Italy, and Russia quietly make their way to the Conference, but the representative of France was conspicuously absent. It was said that though Jules Favre had accepted the commission of the Bordeaux Government to represent France, he found that, at the moment, it would be inexpedient to quit the side of General Trochu. Under the circumstances, the Conference was adjourned for a week, after having declared that a treaty, contracted collectively, could not be abrogated except by the collective consent of the signatories.³ Mr. Odger and Mr. Merriman, with a few others, met disconsolately in the French Minister's committee room and entrusted an address to the editor of *La Liberté*, which, on his return to France, he was to use to induce Favre to hasten over.⁴

The public welcome to the French apostle of republicanism was indefinitely postponed. But on the following day, the King of Prussia became German Emperor and was speedily felicitated on his new honour by Great Britain's

¹ *National Reformer*, Jan. 15, 1871; *Manchester Guardian*, Jan. 12, 1871; *Judy*, Jan. 18, 1871; *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 19, 1871.

² *Volunteer Service Gazette*, Jan. 28, 1871; *Times*, Jan. 18, 1871.

³ Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. iii, p. 1904; Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, p. 356.

⁴ *Times*, Jan. 19, 1871.

Queen. It cannot be said that the haste of the Royal congratulations was in any way indicative of British opinion on the ceremony that took place in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. From first to last, England showed herself disgruntled. The title of Kaiser recalled to her memories of absolute government and aggressive war.¹ "Names express things," observed the *Saturday Review*, "the revived German Empire is the index of great changes which have already happened and it probably points the way to changes of equal magnitude to come." His title was conferred on the uniformed monarch by another king, also in uniform, and in the midst of victorious generals. "Thou hast it now," chanted the *News*, "'King, Cawdor, Glamis, all'—King of an enlarged Prussia, President of the North German Confederation, Emperor of Germany We are willing to hope that a future better, if less brilliant and adventurous than her past, awaits the Prussian nation." It was fearful, however, that the successes of the present campaign might serve to fortify that military element in Prussia, which for centuries had outweighed the interests of the civilian.²

To be sure, the new Emperor, sketched a gracious programme for Germany to carry out under the shadow of his throne. "The new German Empire," said William I, "will, I hope, be an empire of peace." His wish read like a mockery to the *Guardian*, that compared it with rumoured conditions of a peace which would be the equivalent of a proclamation of perpetual war with France.³ The *Tablet*, too, after noticing the cause given France and Austria to plan for revenge, and the alarm England was beginning to

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 9, 1870.

² *Saturday Review*, Dec. 17, 1870.

³ *Daily News*, Dec. 8, 1870.

⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, Jan. 17, 1871.

feel over an invasion, could not see on the political horizon those fair visions of an abiding peace that seemed to have inspired his message.¹ The fear of the military strength of Prussia, prophesied the *Newcastle Chronicle*, for years to come would arrest the pacific development essential to Europe's prosperity.² Tradition belied the Emperor's promises. He was one of that house which had for its ideal the organization of a state into an armed camp. What his line had done for Prussia, it was feared, it would do now for all Germany. "Prussia is by no means the noblest of nations," said the *Globe*.

She has not a notion of what is meant by true political life. Her ideal man is a soldier. The Government may trample on the Constitution, but what is that to the meek citizen? After all, the Constitution is the gift of the Crown. The state is everything and the individual nothing.³

Since the sovereign was supposed to body forth the state for mortal man,—since even the great Bismarck prided himself on rendering him feudal fealty, the character of William I was of the greatest interest to the British. *Vanity Fair* presented its readers with a startling cartoon of the man, who had just been proclaimed Emperor, "by the grace of Krupp." He was represented as seated at dinner,—a gargantuan figure in a bemedalled uniform. Propped on the table were a huge fork and knife bearing the legend, "Bismarck Fab." Red wine had spilled from his glass on the white table linen. A bottle of "Rhin" was at his right hand, and servitors bearing salvers heaped with money bags ascended to the table on long ladders. The sketch of the Emperor's career, which accompanied the picture, ex-

¹ *Tablet*, Jan. 21, 1871.

² *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, Jan. 14, 1871.

³ *Globe and Traveller*, Dec. 28, 1870.

ceeded in its abuse even the vehement *Standard*. He was described as resembling a domesticated tiger, which once having tasted blood, still longed for more. Scheswig-Holstein, Saxony, and Hesse were named as the victims he had devoured to create a zest for the banquet at Versailles. He waited greedily for the destruction of Paris, but piously, withal. For piety, said *Vanity Fair*, was one of the most remarkable elements in his character. He believed that the Almighty preferred needle guns to chassepôts, Uhlans to Zouaves, Germans to French, Prussians to Germans, and the King of Prussia—as his choicest instrument—to all the world.¹ *Judy* depicted him as catching up his imperial robes to run away with the plundered jewel casket of Alsace-Lorraine. He could do this and whatever else he pleased, said *Judy*.

"Because, you see, 'twas understood
He was so very, very good—
He had no fear of Nemesis." ²

If fierce barbarity, reckless waste of life and vandalism were the claims to the title of high and mighty Emperor, the *Belfast Examiner* conceded that the right of the pious and hypocritical William was unquestionable.³

More temperate estimates of the Emperor did appear, but sparsely. The *Economist* compared him very cleverly with Wellington, as the Iron Duke had appeared during the long peace: "a very efficient officer—not general—of Tory opinions, whose self esteem has been a good deal raised by success, and who judges of policy by a narrow, though honest code,—the visible and immediate interest of the country he governs."⁴ But tolerance never went so far as to allow

¹ *Vanity Fair*, Jan. 7, 1871.

² *Judy*, Feb. 8, 1871.

³ *Belfast Examiner*, Jan. 23, 1871.

⁴ *Economist*, Jan. 21, 1871.

a eulogy. At the most, it was only admitted that the future might modify the current distrust.

England, having been distracted for the moment by the Imperial coronation, returned to her own affairs the more eagerly, because the distraction had been an unpleasant one. Within the interim of the meetings of the Conference, politicians, by their speech-making, continued to give a fair index of the views that were held on British policy. One of these was Mr. Otway, an under secretary in Granville's Department, who had resigned his office on account of the strong opinions he held on the Government's pacifism. His resignation, says Sir Charles Dilke, had fallen flat¹ and he went to Chatham to explain his course to his constituents. In his speech there, he condemned Bismarck for the bombardment of Paris and for a brutality of speech which would not be forgiven while the Seine and Rhine should flow. In regard to his own resignation, he intimated that it had been offered as a protest against the timorous policy of Ministers, who believed England had fallen so low that, even in conjunction with Italy and Austria, she would be held of no account.²

At Manchester, Mr. Jacob Bright told his electors that no pretext should induce England to adopt a policy of intermeddling. Whatever might occur, he, for one, would not be tempted, whether in defense of treaties or anything else, to depart from the course which the Cabinet was now pursuing. Men might say what they would of this policy, as being mean and selfish, but he defied them to show that any benefit for the world had ever come from a contrary course. The Member for Leeds, Mr. Baines, confined his recommendations of pacifism more strictly to the matter in hand. He hoped that the Government would use all friendly means

¹ Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of Sir Chas. Dilke*, vol. ii, p. 121.

² *Spectator*, Jan. 21, 1871.

of bringing the war to a close, but would, on no account, suffer England to be drawn into it.¹ Mr. Samuel Morley, who had been selected to second the Address to the Throne, was another of those who favoured their constituents with soft, pacific utterance. He went so far as to commend the German demand for Alsace and Lorraine, on the ground that the annexation would be a guarantee for peace. His colleague for Bristol, who disagreed with this opinion, was at one with him in approving the policy of non-intervention.

While these speeches were being made in the provinces, negotiations were carried on for the representation of France at the next meeting of the Conference. The French Government was insistent that the question of the war and the position of their country should be discussed at the Council Board. Granville opposed their insistence very firmly. He seemed more than ever fearful of offending the new Emperor. For whereas, in the previous month he had shown himself eager to secure the presence of the French, he gave no vigorous support to Favre's request for a safe conduct.³ This complaisance was agreeable, indeed, to Bismarck. If his memoirs can be trusted, the Chancellor was fearful that a delegate from France might succeed, after the manner of Talleyrand, in grafting extraneous and troublesome questions upon the official programme of discussions.⁴ Undoubtedly, Bismarck's manipulations to prevent this were suspected in London. A leader of the *Globe* on the twenty-third had this to say:

But one judgment can be pronounced on the refusal of Count Bismarck to grant the French Minister a safe conduct to England.

¹ *Spectator*, Jan. 21, 1871.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Annual Register* for 1871, vol. cxii, p. 7; cf. Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, p. 356.

⁴ *Bismarck's Souvenirs*, vol. ii, p. 374; *Invasion of France*, *Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1871, pp. 122 et seq.

Anything more absurd than the argument by which Bismarck supports his decision could not easily be found among the eccentricities of sophistry. . . . If Count Bismarck holds that the Committee of National Defense is sufficiently empowered to surrender national territory into his hands, on what principle does he refuse to allow the admitted representative of that body—the very man with whom he has previously treated—the facilities necessary for his appearance as the representative of France at a Conference where it is conceded France must be represented?

The men who had planned the rather spectacular reception for Jules Favre had to content themselves with a protest meeting in Trafalgar Square the night before the reconvening of the Conference. As the reporter of the *Times* saw it, a very large crowd stood for two hours in a storm of wind and rain, listening to bitter denunciations of the governing class of Prussia and Great Britain. Costermongers' "flamers" struggled with the wet darkness, and the flags of fifteen nations flapped dankly against their standard poles. From the foot of Nelson's monument, Odger protested that, though the English working class had held meeting after meeting, and had called upon the Government time after time to intervene, they had been as little heeded as if they had inhabited the antipodes. He named again the reasons that appeared so potent for British interference, and, when he had concluded, the crowd voted resolutions of sympathy and indignation. The motion embodying them was proposed by an Irishman and seconded by a German.¹

With that strange inconsistency which often appears in reputable journals between editorial and reportorial statements, the British public was reassured on another page of the *Times* as to the meeting's little importance. Some few hundred people "clustered loosely" at Nelson's monument, it was admitted, but only the deceptive darkness made it appear that they were in unanimity with the speakers. "The

¹ *Times*, Jan. 24, 1871, p. 5.

only thing grand in the demonstration was the attitude of Sir Edwin Landseer's lions, in no inept representation of the feelings of the British lion himself towards those who were usurping his name and authority."¹ In the *Saturday Review*, the affair was described as a mob meeting, promoted by the organizers of half a dozen revolutionary clubs which occupied themselves with schemes for the overthrow of the monarchy and for the general division of property. Very frankly it acknowledged that England would have welcomed the loss of all the speakers at Trafalgar Square and nine tenths of their audience.²

Foreign diplomats, by these editorial utterances, were given to understand that there existed in England only sweet concord, and that any raucous shoutings which might have disturbed their slumber came only from such professional malcontents as cumber all great capitals. The Conference reassembled on the day following this mooted demonstration, and with much peace and amity recognized the King of Prussia's new title of German Emperor. This service rendered, the diplomats adjourned to reconvene in February, when it was hoped Providence might so order it that an appropriate representative from France be added to their number.³

Providence, that portion of it which is German, was doing the very best it could in this regard. Continued French defeats and the discontent in the capital, which had broken out in a radical disturbance a day or two before, had so worked upon the Paris Government that the twenty-fourth of January found Favre, not in London, but at Versailles. He was negotiating there for such an armistice as would permit the constitution of a Government whose representatives could go forth freely in the odor of legal sanctity.

¹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1871, p. 9.

² *Saturday Review*, Jan. 28, 1871.

CHAPTER XV

THE ARMISTICE

WHILE the British awaited the capitulation of Paris, they speculated with much anxiety on the terms that might be won from Bismarck. For it was recognized with distinct misgivings that their determination would rest, not with the Emperor, but with his Chancellor. In England a card game was in vogue called "Benedetti,"—the rules of which amusingly indicate the estimation then current of the great Prussian's diplomatic value. He was represented by the knave of clubs, and, in scoring, it was declared "Bismarck" could take any card at any time. Moreover, if the dealer had the good fortune to turn "Bismarck" as a trump, he was privileged to score himself a generous number of points.¹

This belief that it was the Chancellor who would shape conditions at Versailles and influence them thereafter, caused the British to couple with their fear for France a corresponding discontent with their own inactivity. A very clear index of their feelings appeared in the tremendous vogue of a little pamphlet called *The Fight at Dame Europa's School*. It was written by William Henry Pullen, a Minor Canon of Salisbury, and published by him, after it had been rejected by several publishers. So great was its popularity that, late in February, its sales had totalled two hundred thousand copies. The reason that the Minor Canon was so generously reimbursed was that he had given expression clearly and exactly to the public feeling of the moment. "There is nothing," says Goethe, "in which

¹ Colburn's *New Monthly Magazine*, Dec., 1870, vol. cxlvii, pp. 714 et seq.

people more betray their character than in what they find to laugh at." The amusement that this slim pamphlet excited appears to have been a sort of Freudian disguise for an inhibited pugnacity.

Dame Europa's school is described as being made up of boys of every size and character. The Five Great Powers have been appointed by the Dame to assist her as monitors. Of these, two, Louis and John, appear as close friends. Louis had made himself a garden and a little arbour, in which John sometimes took his pleasure, when he had tired of the dirt and litter of his workshop. William, another of the Monitors, is jealous of their happiness, and plans to steal two flower-beds from the garden. He is encouraged by his fag, one Mark, who tells him John will not help Louis, because he cares only for making things to sell the other boys. William is a bit of a humbug who reads the Testament and sings psalms, while he lets Mark provoke Louis into a quarrel. After the first bout, he writes home on a postcard that, aided by Providence, he has hit the little French boy in the eyes and is marvellously satisfied with the events Heaven has thus brought about.

Billy, John's head fag, and Bobby, who keeps his accounts, persuade him into being a neutral, though he says he hates the word. So he contents himself with binding little Louis' wounds between the rounds. Dame Europa, when she hears the fight has been continued because John chose to be a neutral, is very angry. She says neutrality is cowardice, and that one must take sides. The other boys tell her John did take sides,—that he "sucked up to both." In the end the Dame lets him keep his office, but she gives him a sound wiggling. If Ben and Hugh had been his fags, she thinks the disgraceful affair would never have taken place. She reminds him that there was a time when he had only to hold up his finger to make the whole school tremble,

and regrets that he has grown a sloven and a screw. "Take care," she warns, "that William does not get a footing in the river and some fine morning take your pretty island by surprise." She is ashamed that John has boasted of bravery and power, and when the time came for exercising them, has whined out that he didn't exactly see how it could be done. Louis' wounds, for a long time, will bear witness to the futility of having had a neutral friend, who would do nothing to stay a storm of cruel, savage blows.¹

The brochure was not in the class of the political satires of Swift and Thackeray, but it hit the nail on the head with a good sound blow. One is not surprised that it called forth a host of imitators. By March the scholastic allegory seems to have pushed its popularity too far. Dame Europa, according to the *Graphic*, had brought forth such a multitudinous progeny that England had grown weary of them.² But the initial sale of the original pamphlet gives justification to Frederic Harrison's claim that, could the war have been continued some months longer, public opinion would have forced Gladstone to abandon his policy of "hesitating impotence."³

The Ministry was being scored for its creeping paralysis and dubbed a company of lotos-eaters, but its detractors found it difficult to change the unanimity of abuse into unanimous approval of any single course of action. Throughout January, the *Times* had urged intervention. But at the end of the month, when Favre was already at Versailles and England had fallen to the greatest depth of unpopularity with both belligerents, nothing less than forcible interven-

¹ *Dame Europa's School* (London, 1871), *passim*; *Once a Week*, Feb. 11, 1871; *Daily News*, Feb. 4, 1871; *Tablet*, Feb. 25, 1871; *Notes and Queries*, 1871, vol. vii, p. 181.

² *Graphic*, Feb. 18, 1871.

³ Harrison, *Autobiographic Memoirs*, vol. ii, p. 15.

tion could have given promise of success. In republican Paris, the English were so hated that, Felix Whitehurst wrote, they were advised not to appear in certain districts for fear they would be insulted.¹ At Versailles, where Odo Russell said all diplomats were treated as school boys,² an especial amount of disrespect seems to have been meted out to England. On one occasion, Bismarck's attention was momentarily diverted from his interviews with Favre by the British request that he permit a gunboat to go up the Seine to carry away from Paris the English families there. He chose to distrust the petitioners: "They merely want to ascertain if we have laid down torpedoes and then let the French ships follow them. What swine! They are full of vexation and envy because we have fought great battles here and won them. They cannot bear to think that little Prussia should prosper so."³ And when at dinner he was interrupted by a telegram from Queen Victoria, he remarked sarcastically, "I know what that is. We always listen to what she says."⁴

Guizot, withdrawn as he was from the centre of things, could not know how singularly untimely was the letter he was sending Gladstone to urge on him mediation. He would have had England, jointly with the other Neutrals, ascertain the Prussian terms and then represent to the Delegate Government the justice of convoking a National Assembly to speak for all of France.⁵

¹ Whitehurst, *My Private Diary*, etc., vol. ii, pp. 231-232.

² Letter from Taine, May 23, 1871, Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, vol. ii, p. 392.

³ *The Empress Frederick*, pp. 242-243.

⁴ *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, p. 232.

⁵ *Illustrated London News*, Jan. 28, 1871; a previous appeal of Guizot's, addressed to France itself, was quoted in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Jan., 1871, *Provisional Government and the French Nation*, vol. xxiii, pp. 173 et seq.

The English observed that the only objection to his two wishes was that they were impossible. No coöperation could be expected from Russia and Austria. The Italian Government had declared to its interpellators that it would not mediate, save in conjunction with the other Powers. A request backed simply by Great Britain and Italy would serve only to exhibit the breach that had been made in the League of Neutrals. As for the National Assembly, it could not be convened upon a wish. Such time as was necessary for its election and convocation would have to be bought by at least a tacit acceptance of the principal terms on which it was to deliberate. With one third of France occupied by German armies, that free discussion, which Guizot seemed to anticipate, was out of the question.¹

There remained for England the choice of quietly admitting the impotence of her isolation or vigorously declaring herself as to the terms to be proposed. There remained, too, a compromise course, and Granville took it. Early in January, he had informed von Bernstorff that blame would attach to Prussia, should she allow France to become totally disorganized.² On January the twentieth, he seems to have come to regard even this mild warning as presumptuous, for he wrote urging that Germany, in the full tide of her victories, should not misconstrue his simple efforts to end the war.³ Bismarck, it may be conjectured, felt no need of the reassurance of the second note, because the dire threat of the first had not alarmed him. He was thinking of many things at this time, but the judgment of history does not appear to have been one of them. He received Favre at Versailles and listened to his representations in the full

¹ *Weekly Scotsman*, Dec. 30, 1870; *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 28, 1871.

² *Annual Register* for 1871, vol. cxii, p. 254.

³ Granville to Loftus, Jan. 20, 1871, *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxxii.

confidence that France had still to fight her fight alone. The respectful despatches of Granville seemed only to confirm his power.

Several days after the Versailles negotiations, amusing details of the interviews reached London in private letters. Lyons wrote that Favre, at one time, had explained that his position in Paris was very critical, whereupon Bismarck suggested the expedient of organizing a rising so as to be able to suppress it while the army was still at his disposal. That was the only right way to manage a mob, he had explained obligingly. M. Favre was rather dazed at the advice.¹

On the occasion of his second visit, he took General Beaufort and three staff officers to bear him company and arrange the military details of the capitulation. Some hot punch was given them at the outpost, which, Odo Russell wrote, was generously passed from the empty stomachs of the poor fellows to their empty heads. In this plight they misunderstood one of their hosts, when he expressed the hope that the negotiations would lead to peace, and, taking all for granted, "set to and danced the cancan." Favre had the wit to apologize for their ebullition as being the effect of Prussian punch on Parisian hunger. He dined with Bismarck while his companions were being put in a condition to discuss affairs with less emotion. Bismarck had the poor taste to say that Favre, too, testified to the severity of Parisian hunger, by popping a beef steak into his pocket to take home to his wife.²

Whatever laughter diplomatists indulged in at these episodes was brief and secret. In England there was a very sympathetic appreciation of the difficulties with which the

¹ Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. i, p. 353.

² Lytton to Morley, Feb. 6, 1871, Balfour, *Personal and Literary Letters of Robert, first Earl of Lytton*.

French negotiators had contended. The *Times* of January the twenty-fifth alarmed its readers by asserting that Bismarck, in the event that Favre proved obdurate, was prepared to show him Eugénie's acceptance of the terms and threaten a restoration. Three days later,—the day of the capitulation,—the story was denied by the *Telegraph* on Eugénie's own authority. Denial was made, also, that the Chancellor had ever tried to possess himself of such a document.

Bismarck, however, in a subsequent account of his interviews, admitted that he, at least, used the restoration as a bogey for frightening the French.¹ He claimed to have told Favre that behind the door there waited a delegate of Napoleon, and to have made a pretense of being about to open it. This was the use to which the *News* had said he would put the project. The general opinion was that he was too astute to intend seriously to treat for a government so unpopular as the French Emperor's. The negotiation however, which had been carried on at Chislehurst, and Wilhelmshöhe, and his avowed contempt for the "Gentlemen of the Pavement," induced several prominent Englishmen to believe that Bismarck's wish for a restoration was sincere. Of these perhaps the best informed, but not the least prejudiced, were Sir Robert Morier and Felix Whitehurst.

The plan was very unpopular in England,—more for its suspected ramifications than for itself. Russell wrote that Bismarck could not attempt to effect the Emperor's return without attempting to placate France by some very substantial concession. Either Belgium or Holland, he be-

¹ Loftus, *Diplomatic Reminiscences* (London, 1894), vol. i, pp. 324-326; *Conversations with Prince Bismarck* (edited by Sidney Whitman, London, 1900), p. 44.

² *Daily News*, Jan. 26, 1871.

lieved, was threatened by the project. He advised England not to consider the danger so chimerical as to fail to provide against it. Morier, in a letter written late in January, claimed to have very good Prussian authority for the belief that the plan had long been under consideration. In its early phase it had proposed that the Emperor should annex Belgium in exchange for the cession of Alsace and Lorraine. But the completeness of the Imperial débacle and the setting up of a Republic had occasioned unforeseen difficulties. Morier believed in the accuracy of his informant's knowledge. It is not easy, however, to share his belief, when it is recalled how completely Bismarck had put England on her guard by publishing the Draft Treaty. It seems more credible that the plan was of later origin,—that it developed out of Bismarck's wish to supplant the Republican Government at a time when he thought he might safely disregard Great Britain.¹

Mrs. George Cornwallis West has in her possession an autograph letter of the Emperor's, which shows that Bismarck, in January, was listening with interest to an unauthorized scheme for the advancement of the Prince Imperial. The letter fails to show, however, whether Belgium was in any way involved in the proposals.² Nothing more is certain than that, thus late, attempts were still being made by the Imperialists at negotiation.

An alternative scheme, that may have been considered by Bismarck, was the elevation to the French throne of King Leopold of Belgium—a project, Bismarck told Russell, that had been proposed by Thiers.³ This, too, was unpopular in

¹ Morier to Stockmar, Jan. 27, 28, 1871, *Memoirs of Sir Robt. Morier*, p. 240; see, also, Whitehurst, *My Private Diary*, etc., vol. ii, p. 300.

² Napoleon III to Persigny, Jan. 7, 1871, West, *Reminiscences of Lady Randolph Churchill*, p. 27.

³ Fitzmaurice, *Life of Granville*, vol. ii, p. 74.

England, for it would change, perforce, the neutral status of Belgium, and give Antwerp into the control of a stronger nation. The *Spectator* reported that Germany herself would not consent to it. The Government's propaganda and the persistence of the French in giving battle long after they were considered defeated, had made Germany unwilling to see France placated by any acquisition whatsoever.¹ "You don't keep men in the field for some eight months and win ever so many battles without making professional fighting animals of at least some of them," observed Archibald Forbes.² The officers in command were rather willing, than not, that the terms offered France should breed a spirit of revenge.

It is perhaps probable that neither the British nor Prussian distaste for the schemes involving Belgium influenced Bismarck to abandon them. They may have been talked of only to alarm England, so that, when the true terms were made known, she would regard them with less disfavour. An analogy is the subterfuge of a blustering attorney who overestimates his client's damages that he may influence the jury to grant a lesser figure that is still exorbitant. France, too, the Chancellor may have hoped, might regard his terms with more equanimity when she considered how nearly she had escaped the imposition of a disowned Emperor or a foreign king.

Certain it is, that Bismarck did not appear in the least cast down when he had granted an armistice that would enable the French themselves to determine their future government. It was recorded that he even whistled the Prussian hallali,—the hunter's death blast,—at the conclusion of the interviews. "Like all powerful men," said the *Telegraph*, musing on the

¹ *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

² Forbes, *My Experiences of the War between France and Germany*, vol. ii, p. 479.

gaiety of heart shown by this incident, "he lives too near the speed and splendour of cosmic forces to be dull."¹ The *Spectator* received the information as to the Count's usual place of residence with delightful sarcasm. It supposed that the *Telegraph* meant, in plain English, that the whistling of the death blast at the moment of the surrender of Paris was a proof of the Chancellor's sympathy with the course and progress of history at its mightiest flood, and that one should marvel at the understanding of this bouyant soul, that had recognized the analogy between killing a boar and being in at the death of a great nation.²

On January the twenty-eighth, Paris capitulated. The next day the forts were occupied by German soldiers. It had been considered the great card with which the struggle would be lost or won. For those who had been infected with the contagion of Gambetta's hopefulness, the defeat of Bourbaki, occurring almost at the same time, was proof that even the efforts of the provinces must fail. The contest had lasted twenty-one weeks since the overthrow of the empire. In that time, wrote Vizetelly, the country had become very weary of the struggle. Only Faidherbe and Chanzy, Freycinet, and a few others shared Gambetta's wish further to prolong it.³ "Gambetta's war is now murder," said von Moltke. England believed that he was right. She was chary of showing such sympathy as would encourage the war's continuance; but she was very generous in showing a practical sympathy for French suffering.

On the second day after the capitulation, the Lord Mayor's Committee, through Alfred Rothschild, succeeded in getting into Paris its first consignment of supplies. The next day, the British Government generously offered all the

¹ *Daily Telegraph*, Feb., 1871.

² *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

³ Vizetelly, *My Days of Adventure*, pp. 322-323.

stores of the Administration for the capital's relief. No less than £52,000 worth of food, it is said, was sent in in the first despatch. In February, the English Committee took the distribution into its own hands to such effect that Britishers were gratified at hearing themselves called *ces bons Anglais* in a city that recently had hated them. John Bull was proving himself the exception to the rule that no fat man is popular at the end of a siege.¹

The Commissioner of the Mansion House Relief Fund recorded in his diary that for five months there had been no milk nor fat to be had, save for fabulous prices. The very old and very young had suffered, not only from malnutrition, but from the depression caused by lack of light and heat. They had died in great numbers. Do what the British could, the Prussians had done their work so well that suffering continued far into February. At one of the warehouses kept exclusively to provision women, the Commissioner watched a long queue waiting all night long through sleet and rain, and into the next day. "I have seen more tears shed by men and women," he said, "than I hope I shall ever see again."² With something of the old French flair, the Provisional Government returned the pheasants and other delicacies that made a little part of the tons of provisions sent for distribution.³ It was not for lack of luxuries France had surrendered.

Perhaps statistics on the contributions and a discussion of the means of distribution would give no clearer index of British sympathy than the letter of a poet to his publisher:

I want to give something to the people in Paris, and can afford

¹ *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, pp. 218 *et seq.*; *Times*, Feb. 1, 4, 6, 1871; *Graphic*, Feb. 18, 1871.

² George Moore, *The London Deputation in Paris, Good Words*, Feb., 1871, pp. 402 *et seq.*

³ *Memoirs of Sir Edward Blount*, p. 219.

so very little just now that I am forced upon an expedient. Will you buy of me that poem . . . which I like better than most things I have done of late? . . . Would—for the love of France—that this were the “Song of a Wren”—then should the guineas equal the lines; as it is, do what you safely may for the sake of a Robin—Browning.¹

The poem was *Hervé Riel*,—one of the very few that he ever allowed to appear in a magazine.

While the British were busily engaged in preparing shipments for Paris, they were startled by a very extraordinary telegram that was published in the *Times* on the last day of January. It was the announcement, by that paper’s Berlin correspondent, of the terms Bismarck was alleged to have outlined to Favre during their recent interviews. They provided for the annexation of both Alsace and Lorraine; the payment by France of an indemnity of £400,000,000; the cession of Pondicherry in India; and the surrender of twenty first-class men-of-war. Had such terms appeared in any other paper they would have been dismissed as too exorbitant to merit consideration. But the *Times*, it was observed, had so often anticipated even the German press in publishing the Chancellor’s intentions, that it could not be disregarded.²

The stock market at once registered the British uneasiness. The prospect of £400,000,000 being withdrawn to Germany caused the value of money to shoot upwards like a sky rocket and prices to tumble like its tail.³ Men had believed the capitulation was a prelude to peace. This staggering news made them fear it was only an interim between a duel and a general conflict. Even if Favre had heard these

¹ Browning to Mr. Smith of *Cornhill Magazine*, Feb. 4, 1871; Orr, *Robt. Browning, Life and Letters*, p. 45; Griffith and Minchin, *Life of Robt. Browning*, p. 243.

² *Standard*, Feb. 2, 1871.

³ *Illustrated London News*, Feb. 4, 1871.

terms, as the correspondent claimed, Gambetta had not. It was believed he would not submit to them, and that Favre would approve him and fight on. To do so, said the *Standard*, would be to lose nothing materially and to gain much morally.¹ France would be endowed, thought the *Graphic*, with the energy of despair.² Both the *Economist* and the *Times*³ declared the payment of the tremendous indemnity impossible. The demand for Lorraine was regarded as equally extravagant. Metz was not only essentially and emphatically a part of France, but was necessary for her safety. As the *Spectator* phrased it, the cession of Metz would make France a political dependency of Germany.⁴

Loud as were the protests excited by each of the articles, the one that provoked the greatest remonstrance was that concerning India. The *Times*, it is true, at first pretended to regard the cession of Pondicherry as of relative unimportance. Its judgment was derided by all the British press. The matter was regarded as one that concerned England very nearly. With a German garrison once ensconced in Pondicherry, said the *Standard*, Bismarck could boast he had set his boot heel in a corner of the British Empire.⁵ It was recalled that France had kept her hold on India somewhat on sufferance. After the Napoleonic wars she had accepted England's restriction on the number of her forces there. It could not be expected that Germany would acknowledge any such obligation. The *Spectator* and *John Bull*⁶ believed that, by the provisions of the Treaty of 1815,

¹ *Standard*, Feb. 2, 1871.

² *Graphic*, Feb. 4, 1871.

³ Issues of Feb. 4, 2, 1871, respectively.

⁴ *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

⁵ *Standard*, Feb. 2, 1871.

⁶ Issues of Feb. 4, 1871.

Prussia was precluded not only from sending troops to Pondicherry but from demanding its cession. It had not been restored to France in fee simple. Every possible argument was adduced against its change of ownership, for it was acknowledged that in the event of a German raid into the interior and a partial British defeat, southern India might be roused to insurrection. England was urged forthwith to occupy the place herself, even at the risk of war.

Moderate papers, like *Saunders'*, believed that, since Great Britain's affairs were so trenched on by the peace terms, she should, at last, induce the Neutrals to intervene.¹ The time had come, said the *Standard*, for the Government to determine whether it would persist to the end "in that pitiable affectation which by a euphemism it dubbed non-intervention."² The editor strove to persuade the Ministry that, if they would abandon its policy of no policy, other Neutrals would join with them so that Bismarck would be forced to heed their wishes.

In the *Fortnightly*, Frederic Harrison was no less insistent. "It will be the knell of peace and liberty," he said,

when the triumphant Emperor of Germany bestrides the Continent without an equal. If he succeed in doing so, it will be the act of England, who stands by trading and sermonising, selling arms but using none . . . droning out homilies and betraying every duty of a nation.³

He begged that his countrymen abandon that course "which the new Emperor of the West told them with a gibe, as they came bowing to his court, was the only policy that remained for them—the policy of self-effacement." In Ire-

¹ *Saunders'*, Feb. 3, 1871.

² *Standard*, Feb. 3, 1871.

³ Harrison, *Effacement of England*, *Fortnightly*, Feb. 1, 1871, pp. 145 et seq.

land, the *Freeman* warned England that if she remained quiescent during the armistice, the vociferous sympathy she had avowed would be proved hypocrisy.¹ Robert Buchanan tried the expedient of poetic declamation on the sluggish British lion, in this wise:

“England, awake! or the tomb may cover thee!
Awake, awake, for the shroud is over thee!
England, awake, if thou be not dead!
The seas are crying, the clouds are flying,
Fair France is dying;—her blood flows red;
Europe in thunder is rent asunder,” etc.²

And then word came that the correspondent of the *Times* had been inaccurate in his report of the peace terms. Assurance was specially given that Prussia had no designs on Pondicherry. Whether Bismarck had allowed the rumour to stand for four days uncorrected through sheer disregard of British opinion, or whether he had been brought to moderate his intentions by the popular clamour, it is difficult to say.³ Many did not inquire into the circumstances of the denial but received it thankfully, as affording escape from war. Others were regretful at having lost a chance to wreck the Governmental policy. It was recognized that the Ministry could not be forced to action now until Parliament should be convoked.

Prussian credit, however, remained at low ebb. Alarm as to the punitive character that the peace might take, had been heightened by a vision of disaster to England. It would appear that even Granville's composure had been shaken. His attitude on the expediency of bringing the situation of France before the Conference had undergone a change. On the fourth of February, he notified Lyons that

¹ *Weekly Freeman*, Feb. 4, 1871.

² Buchanan, *England Awake!*, *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

³ *Standard*, Feb. 7, 1871.

if the French plenipotentiary should come to London and, at the end of one of the sittings or at the end of the Conference, lay before that body questions of vital interest to France he, as chairman, would not interfere but would attend with interest whatever might be said.¹ It was an invitation, in diplomatic kind, for Favre to attempt the part Cavour had played, in 1856, at Paris. Whether the Frenchman could have argued a finer cause with equal eloquence is matter for conjecture. The Conference reconvened, on the seventh, with France still absent.

Another reaction to the enterprise of the Berlin correspondent of the *Times* was an increase in the clamour for military preparedness. Men believed more readily that the influence of an *entente* that could have allied the French army with the British navy should be maintained by England alone through an increase of armament. Those citizens of Manchester and Leeds who had put their trust in a "Mill—ennium" were admonished to visit subjugated France. They would find that vast tracts of its richest and most industrious districts had been deliberately stripped and plunged into famine. Cities had been bombarded and burned,—not once but many times; women and children slaughtered by invaders, who had been prepared even to the point of a philosophy to justify their havoc. London was urged to gird herself with walls so that, when need arose, she could be defended as gallantly as had been Paris.²

Archibald Forbes wrote that a young Prussian guardsman, to the delight of his companions, had impudently announced that before two years had gone the Queen Elizabeth Regiment would be besieging Windsor Castle. At the bat-

¹ Deschanel, *Gambetta*, pp. 115-116.

² Cf. Feb. letters to *Times*; J. S. Russell, *Into Versailles and Out*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, Jan., 1871, vol. xxiii, pp. 255 *et seq.*; *London Fortified*, *ibid.*, Feb., 1871.

teries and on the outposts, the men Forbes talked with longed for peace, but they would go where they were led,—even though some of their young leaders might be so ignorant as to think that Windsor Castle was England's strongest fortress. Charles Ryan, who was serving with an ambulance corps, was another who heard much boasting. He reported that stripling officers vowed they would shadow all the nations of Europe with the wings of the Imperial Eagle. England, they admitted, would come last, but time could be trusted to provide an opportunity even for its conquest.²

Other days must bring other policies. England could not afford to devote herself to trade when, as George Eliot said, barbarism had arisen from that historic tomb where it had been supposed to lie with Barbarossa. Sir Robert Morier, who had lived long in Germany, was fearful of the effect of the unparalleled success. No good, he knew, would come from the ascendancy of the Junkers and their Militar Cabinet.³ Who could foretell what they might do? Frederic Harrison described them as a class, knit close by all the ties of pride and interest, possessed of high education, able to wield power alike in town and country, and yet so weak as to depend on the Emperor, and, above all, devoted passionately to war. Was England to be content to watch their conquests, and in the future cry out as she did now, "My friends, keep clear of these wicked men! Wicked men, shake hands and be friends?"⁴

There existed, none the less, a small group who believed it illogical that a nation should buckle on its armour in order

¹ Forbes, *My Experiences of the War between France and Germany*, vol. ii, pp. 480-481.

² Ryan, *With an Ambulance in the Franco-German War*, p. 276.

³ Morier to Stockmar, Jan. 22, 1871, *Memoirs of Sir Robt. Morier*, p. 241.

⁴ Harrison, *Effacement of England*, *Fortnightly*, Feb. 1, 1871.

to woo peace. Morley and Mill¹ were of these. Sir Wilfred Lawson was another. He advocated, however, such preparation as would consist in chartering a ship and manning it with diplomats, warlike editors, and fire-eating bishops under the command of Lord John Russell. Should this redoubtable bark fall into the hands of the enemy, he held himself ready to sing *Te Deums* for its loss.² Some in the group believed that Prussia would repent of its triumphs and demand a return of the power that the military faction had usurped. Her youth had been crippled by the war, her family life afflicted, the Treasury burdened with a great debt. Already, they claimed, the more advanced of her citizens saw war's futility. The newly made Emperor was not immortal and, at his death, a prince would reign, who would strive valiantly for peace. Much should be looked for from him and from his wife, who was a British princess. Bismarck, they argued, might even come to help him. For the Chancellor was too practical to be influenced by those who preached pan-Teutonism. In due time, he might bend to the sense of justice that was popular in Germany and inaugurate that policy of peace and freedom which now he opposed.³

Not many cherished such roseate hopes for the Minister of blood and iron. But even among those who feared him, there was objection to the adoption of his methods. Instead of plunging into warlike preparations and through alarm creating more alarm, there was a minority which hoped that England would do all she could to strengthen the moderate element in every nation. They believed that free-

¹ Mill to Pasquale Villari, Feb. 16, 1871, and to Cliffe Leslie, *Letters of J. S. Mill*, vol. ii, pp. 304, 305.

² *Graphic*, Feb. 18, 1871.

³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Feb. 4, 1871; C. E. Maurice, *Count Bismarck*, *Contemporary Review*, Jan., 1871.

dom could be arrived at only through observing the restrictions of international law. J. M. Ludlow advocated with skill and much earnestness the formation of an Imperial Federation which, backed by arms, should restore to the conventions made by nations that respect they seemed to have lost. He would have attempted to arrive at peace and justice by the establishing of a system of international police and by the adoption of the principle of compulsory arbitration.¹

Men who talked in this wise could not get themselves heard. The world's acoustics are better adapted to the sound of artillery fire than to the voice of the peacemaker. But what has been said for war lingers through all the halls of memory, and, when men speak for it anew, reverberates to amplify their utterance. And echo plays such pranks with truth that splendid thoughts seem made to march in quick step. The *Edinburgh* quoted Lord Bacon: "Let it suffice, that no estate expects to be great, that is not awake upon any just occasion of arming."² In *Macmillan's*, England was urged in Milton's mighty lines to rouse herself from slumber and renew her mighty youth.³ Audience was given to Mr. Vernon Harcourt when he urged the argument of history to condemn "the new phase of that dark eclipse called foreign policy," and when he begged that British patriotism demand such armament as could defend the Empire.⁴ It was yielded willingly to Frederic Harrison when he inveighed against the effacement of

¹ J. M. Ludlow, *Reconstitution of Europe*, *Contemporary Review*, Feb., 1871, pp. 499 *et seq.*

² *Military Forces of the Crown*, *Edinburgh Review*, Jan., 1871, pp. 207 *et seq.*

³ "Military Contributor," *England's Place among the Nations*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, Feb., 1871, pp. 358 *et seq.*

⁴ Speech to his constituents at Oxford.

Great Britain. But the fine philosophy of John Stuart Mill and the warm humanity of Morley could win no approval for their support of pacifism.

The British were shamed and fearful, but they were impatient of accepting anything that promised comfort for their distress. They seem to have derived almost a Spanish delight from self-inflicted flagellation. No one so vigorously applied the lash as *Judy*. Under the seal of the British Empire, John Bull was made to inform the public, heads of families and teachers in infant schools, that he had ready for exhibition on very reasonable terms his celebrated British lion. The awe-inspiring and terrific roar of the noble animal combined with its perfect harmlessness were too well known, he thought, to need description. Anyone could with the greatest impunity, kick or spit upon it, or pull it by the tail, and derive much fun from ferocious demonstrations that portended nothing. It had been recently exhibited at all the courts of Europe and had roused screams of laughter.¹

Though British opinion, during the time of the armistice, was very largely occupied with self-denunciation, a glossary of comment still had to do with France. It was used to illuminate the arguments for preparedness that formed the text. Readers were told how long it would be before the defeated country could become again a useful ally. During the struggle with Prussia, she had appeared unified, but the prospect of peace loosened the bond that had united factions. Felix Whitehurst, who had no sympathy with amateur soldiers and volunteer diplomats, believed their Government would soon be overthrown. Dissension was already weakening the Republic.² Gambetta was disgruntled because

¹ *Judy*, Feb. 8, 1871.

² Whitehurst, *Year One of the Republic*, *Belgravia*, Jan., 1871, pp. 342 et seq.

Favre had not informed him of the details of the armistice. He felt chagrin that he, who had had the direction of the war, had been so signally slighted when the time approached for its conclusion. He feared the Government at Paris, in its eagerness for peace, might slight, also, the claims of the Republic.¹

On the thirty-first of January, he gave forceful expression to his discontent by a proclamation designed to exclude from the Assembly all Bonapartists and members of families that once had ruled in France. Bismarck at once objected that such exclusion would violate the terms of the armistice, which had provided for the convocation of an Assembly freely elected. His objection was regarded by Gambetta as an unwarranted intrusion into the internal affairs of France. The Paris Government chose to uphold it. The issue was clearly drawn and Gambetta resigned.²

It cannot be said that in England his withdrawal was regarded with regret. It was believed that, had he retained his power, he might have won France to a continuance of the war. He was a man, the British said, of 1792, born out of his time and doomed to create only unrest in his frantic efforts to galvanize a past tradition. "His resignation takes a nightmare off the breast of France," said the *Globe*, and the rest of the press nodded approval.³ But though the British were in agreement as to his resignation, they made no effort to belittle the manifest service he had rendered France. A single Gambetta might only push her into civil war, but could he have been multiplied by six he might have freed her from invasion. "Of course," said the *Examiner*, "clear sighted statesmen are best; but there is something

¹ *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871.

² *Standard*, Feb. 3, 4, 16, 1871; *Daily Telegraph*, Feb. 6, 1871.

³ *Globe*, *Times*, *Record*, *Standard*, issues of Feb. 4, 1871; *Graphic*, Feb. 11, 1871.

very noble in the blind zeal of this determined man and something very pathetic in that view of him weeping in the streets of Bordeaux when the bitter news of the surrender of Paris gave the lie to his long cherished hopes." He could have the consolation of knowing, it was thought, that his efforts had proven to Alsace and Lorraine that they were, as least, not to be relinquished tamely to Germany.¹

And Alsace and Lorraine proved grateful. For though France, as a whole, gave approval to the moderate element in the Government of National Defense by electing such delegates as would approve the peace, these two provinces elected ultra Radicals. Paris, too, chose this way of placing herself in the minority. The British regarded the returns with wonderment. No single member of the *de facto* Government, save Gambetta, was returned by the capital. In sober, orderly manner the citizens had gone to the polls and elected the partisans of war at any price.² Archibald Forbes frankly admitted that he did not know what to make of it. He had an inclination to pull off his hat to these cadaverous men, who voted for more war, when it was quite apparent that what they were really in need of was good beef extract.³

The country districts, however, gave hope for peace by returning Conservatives. It was noticed with relief that they no longer supported Napoleon. The proclamation he had issued from Hohenlöhe before the day of the election fell completely flat. Even his support by the Rothschilds was unavailing.⁴

Men wondered how the Republicans of Paris would co-operate with the representatives of the provinces. Paris

¹ *Examiner*, and *Spectator*, Feb. 11, 1871.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Feb. 14; *Spectator*, Feb. 18; *Times*, Feb. 16, 1871.

³ Forbes, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 425-427.

⁴ *Weekly Scotsman*, Feb. 18, 1871.

had played too prominent a part to submit to seeing her delegates ignored. It was rumoured the Government meant to weaken their power by convoking the Assembly at a distance from the capital. This, the *Spectator* thought, would be tantamount to a declaration of civil war by the Departments. The great cities of France might be expected to support the cause of Paris.¹

John Richard Green hoped, but not confidently, that for the sake of its influence on Italy and Spain, France might become decentralized and so find freedom.² But England, as a whole, was not averse to having her slip back quite unobtrusively into the governmental grooves to which she had been accustomed. Capital and provinces had always had their differences. It had seemed many times that France was a monarchy with a republic for its capital,—that it held itself together only by a beautifully articulated system of wheels within wheels. Gambetta had resigned. If the Parisian delegates would refrain from over-emphasis, the abnormal might prove again the normal.

¹ *Spectator*, March 4, 1871.

² Green to E. A. Freeman, Feb. 6, 1871, *Letters of J. R. Green*, pp. 283-284.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NEGOTIATION OF THE PRELIMINARIES

"FORTUNATELY," Disraeli once said of his native land, "this country is not governed by logic. It is a Parliamentary Government, and it is governed by rhetoric."

There had been critics a plenty to point out, during the interim between the sessions, that the Ministry had in no wise subjected the country to a new experience in this regard. To be sure, the flow of eloquence had, perforce, been attenuated. But it was felt that Gladstone and his colleagues had shown that England could be governed just as illogically by the Cabinet alone as by two conscientiously officious Houses. By awkward and obscure means, they had maintained a comfortable peace. It was feared that certain fiery Parliamentarians might, with great comfort to themselves, plunge the country into the discomforts of war.

The illogic of the course was certainly alluring. Those "muscular peacemakers,"¹ who most eagerly favored intervention, had disclosed, with the utmost candour, England's unpreparedness. The time had arrived when she could, at last, be certain of entering the lists without allies, and of reviving hope in France when Gambetta himself had bowed his head to circumstances. There was, also, that age-old temptation to try to arrive at a durable peace through war. But there is this difference between the Briton and the Celt.

¹ Pseudonym of a bellicose correspondent of the *Times*. Lord John Russell was another of those who, as Disraeli phrased it, raised armies by a stroke of the pen.

The first cautiously mixes common sense in his illogic, while the second prefers his in its native purity. It was most probable that the Government would hear its method vociferously attacked and the peaceful end it had achieved unanimously welcomed.

Matthew Arnold, writing in *Pall Mall* under the pseudonym of "von Thundersten-Tronck," was impatient of the forthcoming babble of the "young men from the country" to which England was about to be subjected.¹ The *Telegraph* rejoiced that at least during the progress of the war Parliament had not been sitting. The speeches of individual members would have reëchoed painfully abroad. Foreigners were stupid about understanding that in Parliamentary England the menaces of representatives signified little unless the speakers were in office. Something, even at this late time, was to be feared and nothing to be expected when, on February the eighth, the Honourable Members and Noble Lords resumed their sessions.²

Amidst general disappointment the Queen allowed her speech to be read by the Chancellor, while she sat with head bowed and toyed almost imperceptibly with her fan. Royalty was under attack from the Republicans and it was regretted that Victoria did not choose more actively to fulfil her duties. However, the speech was hardly one to tempt a widowed Queen to break her silence.

The *Standard* characterized it as bald, jejune, and vapid,—at once barren and unctuous. It saw in it the same crowding of ill-fitting words into meaningless phrases that had disfigured the *Edinburgh* article on "Happy England."³ It was a speech with the placidity of a May morning, but

¹ Cf. Blanchard Jerrold, *At Home in Paris*, vol. ii, pp. 231-237.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 3, 1871.

³ *Standard*, Feb. 19, 1871.

without its freshness. Journalists set themselves to tricking it out with interpretations to their liking.

"I greatly regret," Her Majesty had said, "that my earnest endeavours have failed to procure the presence at the Conference of any representative of France, which was one of the chief parties to the Treaty of 1856, and which must ever be regarded as a principal and indispensable Member of the great Commonwealth of Europe."

This, according to the *Spectator*, was intended to mean that any exactions which would permanently cripple France or dispose of her rank as a first-class Power would encounter determined resistance from Great Britain. On the other hand, the congratulations that the Queen extended to Germany on the election of her Emperor, and the hope expressed that the forthcoming peace would comport with the security and honour of the countries involved, was taken to mean that Germany was to be allowed a mountain barrier, but must not aspire to Metz.¹ *John Bull* was another that was able so to read the speech as to find it strong and heartening. Its editor was very certain that the Queen had indicated a desire for a notable increase of armament. Such interpretations were assuredly liberal.²

In the *Standard*, Her Majesty's words were reported more exactly and less favourably. "The chief points," it said, "on which the Government seem to take credit to themselves are that the sphere of war has not been extended beyond the two countries originally engaged, and that they have 'cherished with care the cordiality of their relations with each belligerent.' This careful cherishing of a double cordiality would appear, however, to have yielded but small fruit When these cautious Neutrals did in-

¹ *Spectator*, Feb. 11, 1871.

² *John Bull*, Feb. 11, 1871.

terfere, they were enabled to do so with tremendous effect. They actually succeeded, the Speech declares, in 'placing the representatives of the two contracting countries in confidential communication.' We can imagine the gentleman who performed this alliterative feat regarding his success as almost a triumph of diplomacy. Hereafter when the history of the war comes to be written, let it never be forgotten that the Gladstone Government spared no effort to cherish the cordiality of their foreign relations, and to contribute towards the communications, *etc.*"¹

The Queen's address was listened to thus critically because it was supposed to indicate the attitude of the Ministry. If a somewhat verbose speech may be regarded as an intercession for silence, this one should be so considered. When Gladstone, who, it was presumed, had written it, wished to say little, he said much. When his way appeared obscure, he unfailingly saw before him "three courses." "The English Parliament," said the *Spectator*, "has opened with its finger in its lips. . . . It is hardly a noble attitude, but in these days the United Kingdoms do not go in for nobility, but for safety."²

It immediately became evident that the Government was not to be allowed to maintain its reticence. In the House of Lords, the leader of the Opposition scored the Ministry for having allowed the remonstrance at the Russian abrogation to "collapse into a Conference." He criticised the Home Secretary, Mr. Bruce, for having blatantly failed during the Recess to observe that cordial sympathy, which it was the Queen's boast had been extended to both belligerents.³ He manifested lively doubt as to whether a Gov-

¹ *Standard*, Feb. 10, 1871.

² *Spectator*, Feb. 11, 1871.

³ *Supra*, chap. xii, p. 240, *note*.

ernment, whose watchword had been retrenchment, could be trusted to strengthen adequately the national armaments.¹

In the House, a critic even more aggressive was encountered in Disraeli. It could not be expected that, at a time so momentous, he would have placed himself among the silent Members. He spoke at length and at large. "This war," he said, "represents the German revolution,—a greater political event than the French revolution of the last century Not a single principle in the management of our foreign affairs, accepted by all statesmen for guidance up to six months ago, any longer exists. There is not a diplomatic tradition which has not been swept away. You have a new world, new influences at work, new and unknown objects and dangers with which to cope, at present involved in that obscurity incident to novelty in such affairs The balance of power has been entirely destroyed and the country which suffers most, and feels the effects of the great change most, is England."

He reviewed with discontent the Government's conduct from the inception of the dispute over the Hohenzollern candidature. He revived the claim he had made in July as to England's competence to threaten intervention on the ground of the Treaty of 1815, which had guaranteed Prussia in the possession of the Saxon province. The treaty cited had already been disregarded by England when she accorded recognition to Napoleon III. So signally had it fallen into disuse that it might have served Mill admirably for his thesis on the instability of international engagements.

He was more successful in criticising Odo Russell's mission on the Russian matter. Her Majesty's Government had chosen, after receiving Gortschakoff's note, to consult

¹ Duke of Richmond, Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, Feb. 9, 1871, vol. cciv, pp. 30 *et seq.*

Count Bismarck, "a most eminent man, one whose opinion in a difficult question he believed to be most valuable—but a man who was the Minister of Prussia—a country whose conduct during the Crimean War had been ambiguous and equivocal." He was fearful that the Conference, which Bismarck had suggested with such cynical cordiality, would do no more than register a foregone conclusion. He was of the opinion, further, that the tolerance which the Government had shown in agreeing to discuss the Russian abrogation had induced Prussia to try their amiability by denouncing the treaty guaranteeing Luxemburg.

Here Gladstone was able to correct him. On the last day of the Recess, the Government had been strengthened by a communication from Bernstorff. In it assurance was given that the objection Germany had taken to the proceedings of Luxemburg was one with respect only to military purposes and military necessities, and that she still gave recognition to the treaty of guarantee.¹

The Departments of the Army and the Admiralty were treated no less cavalierly than the Foreign Office. Disraeli scoffed at the "attenuated armaments" that had made impossible the prestige of an "armed neutrality." He rendered sarcastic tribute to Mr. Cardwell and Mr. Childers. Those gentlemen, he said, had been entrusted with office because it was generally understood that they were, on the whole, the administrators most competent to reduce the naval and military strength of the country; and the country, which was always just to public men, had unanimously agreed that the right honourable gentlemen had entirely justified its confidence.²

¹ *Annual Register*, 1871, N. S., p. 269. Diplomatic papers on Luxemburg.

² Hansard, *op. cit.*, Feb. 9, 1871, vol. cciv, pp. 70 *et seq.*; Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, vol. v, pp. 133-134; *Spectator*, Feb. 11, 1871; *Graphic*, Feb. 18, 1871; *Illustrated London News*, Feb. 18, 1871.

On the next day, Mr. Baillie Cochrane and Mr. W. M. Torrens urged that the Government make outspoken representations on the terms of peace about to be negotiated.¹ They did not speak to an audience that was unsympathetic to the sorrow of France. But the Government had promised that in a few days the official documents would be laid before both Houses. Honourable Members preferred to consider these before indulging in further debate on the foreign policy. Further, it was known that within a day or two the Government of France would be formally constituted. England was desirous of discovering what manner of state it was to which she was urged to give support.

Outside Parliament, the sympathy for France was manifesting itself in a way that hindered rather than helped its friends within. It was being increasingly merged, by those who gave it active expression, into agitation for a republic. The Address from the Throne had announced the engagement of Victoria's daughter, Louise, to the Marquis of Lorne. On the following day the Queen requested that a suitable dowry be presented to the young Princess.² She was very popular, and her choice of a Scottish, rather than a German bridegroom, had made her more so.³ But, in spite of this, her claims on England as a princess royal were loudly contested. At Nottingham the grant of a settlement was condemned by a mass meeting, which separated with shouts for the English Republic. At Birmingham those who attempted to defend it were cried down, and the entire Civil List was brought to condemnation. Not a tenth of the meetings held to protest the matter were mentioned in

¹ *Spectator*, Feb. 11, 1871; Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciv, pp. 125-129, 138-144, respectively.

² *Ibid.*, vol. cciv, p. 146.

³ *Punch*, Oct. 29, 1870; J. M. Ludlow, *Europe and the War, Contemporary Review*, Nov., 1870, vol. xv, pp. 649 *et seq.*; *Spectator*, Jan. 28, 1871.

the papers, said the *Spectator*, but quite enough appeared to alarm the friends of monarchy.¹

It was earnestly hoped that no fresh impetus to the movement would come from France. Englishmen were eager to see that country represented at the Conference. They felt that Gladstone's admission of Bismarck's quibble over Favre's safe-conduct was humiliating. But some among them were glad that a firebrand had been kept away from the tinder. They hoped eagerly for a government whose influence would not be revolutionary. The complete failure of the Napoleonic Manifesto to arouse any response during the elections had ended the fear that Bismarck might succeed in elevating to the throne some puppet ruler of his own devising.² Very shortly after this rebuff, the *Berlin Post* recorded that orders had been given for the Imperial prisoner to be watched more closely. The correspondent of the *Graphic*, in reporting this, added that Napoleon had received an intimation that he must abstain from all interference in politics. It was evident that Bismarck's schemes for determining the government of France, whether they had been sincere or merely a method of weakening the Government of National Defence, were definitely abandoned.³

On February the thirteenth, the Assembly convened at Bordeaux. It contained a majority of Monarchists. But France had entertained so many dynasties since the Revolution that it was a majority sadly divided. Since none of the factions was strong enough to prevail alone, and since the Republicans were too strong to be openly flouted, the ingenious idea was evolved of electing as "head of the Ex-

¹ *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 11, 1871.

² *Daily News*, *Times*, *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, *Dublin Evening Mail*, issues of Feb. 13, 1871; for a favourable criticism, cf. *Standard*, Feb. 14, 1871.

³ *Graphic*, Feb. 25, 1871.

ecutive" someone who could combine in his own proper person the elements of all the several parties. There was only one logical candidate for such a position. It was M. Thiers, and he was forthwith elected.¹

"No living man," said the *Times*, "could pretend to a greater experience in the formation of a new Government. His name, either as historian or actor, was connected with every chapter of the great French Revolution from 1789 to the present day."² The chameleon quality of M. Thiers, combined, as it was, with a dignity and patriotism that were unquestioned, was very appealing. Each party, saving only the Red Republicans, thought he might be tinted with its color. The Orleanists, according to a Lombard telegram from Lyons, had confidently assigned him a place in their Cabinet.³ France, said the *News*, would soon cease to be a Republic and would welcome, again, the House of Orleans.⁴ M. Thiers would be invaluable in bridging the way to such a consummation.

But M. Thiers had recently declared he was no longer an Orleanist and the Legitimists were hopeful of his sincerity. To those Frenchmen who concerned themselves more with the establishment of peace than with the fate of a party, his election was equally agreeable. They were weary of the call to die for their country. Thiers, they thought, better than any other, could negotiate the ultimate treaty and recommend its acceptance with such dignity that it would be least hurtful to French vanity. If he could not revive France, after the manner of Gambetta, he could afford her *un enterrement de première classe*.⁵

¹ Atkins, *Life of Sir W. H. Russell*, vol. ii, p. 235.

² *Times*, Feb. 27, 1871.

³ *Tablet*, Feb. 18, 1871.

⁴ *Daily News*, Feb., *passim*.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1871.

An amazing proof of his versatility was that he was able to please not only his countrymen, but the invaders. Bismarck was well content with the head of the Government with which he was about to treat. "There is scarcely a trace of the diplomatist about him," he told his secretary, "he is far too sentimental for that trade. He is not fit to be a negotiator; he allows himself to be bluffed too easily; he betrays his feelings and allows himself to be pumped."¹

Garibaldi departed. Gambetta pled physical exhaustion and went into temporary retirement.² No one knew which royal road France was about to take. But it seemed certain, at last, that she was safe from Red Republicanism. "And so," wrote the head of the Executive, concluding the happy story of his election, "in less than an hour after the vote that placed me in power, the Ambassadors of England, Austria, and Italy came to inform me of the official recognition of the new Government by their Cabinets."³

In the British press his election was greeted by comments so divergent that one might almost have believed France had chosen as her leader a sort of Jekyll-Hyde combination unique in history. In the *Guardian's* opinion "M. Thiers would by foreigners, as well as by natives, be almost invariably selected as the representative Frenchman of the age." He was praised as having kept unsullied his character for political foresight and sagacity. He had condemned the war and refused to accept responsibility for its continuance. But by pleading the cause of France abroad

¹ Julian Kune, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian Hungarian Exile*, p. 187.

² J. M. Ludlow, *Reconstitution of England*, *Contemporary Review*, Feb., 1871, pp. 499 *et seq.*

³ *Memoirs of Thiers*, 1870-1873, p. 119; see also Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, vol. i, p. 83.

and by negotiating with the victors, he had given practical proof of his sympathy with her hard pressed Government.¹

The *Mail* viewed him less benignantly. "Of all Frenchmen," said one of its leaders,

he would be, in ordinary times and under different circumstances, the last towards whom foreign nations would feel called upon to evince consideration or forbearance; for his patriotism was at all times selfish, jealous and aggressive, and his policy aimed singly at French preponderance founded on the division and degradation of all neighbouring nations.²

The *Standard* condemned him for being personally responsible for the present calamities. He had voted against the war only because he believed it inopportune. "Whatever is bad in Napoleonism, whatever pernicious fruit it has yielded during the last twenty years, is the growth of the spirit first planted by M. Thiers in those wild romances which he calls 'Histories of the Consulate and Empire.'"³

In the *Times*, France was advised that stability was the first thing to be attained, stability, the second thing, stability, the third, and that Thiers was the leader, above all, who could give it to her.⁴ The *Spectator*, on the other hand, could, by no means, see that France had found a rock of Gibraltar on which to cling.

Never was any forlorn sufferer content to find shelter under a more diminutive fragment of rock in a weary land than France under the leadership of M. Thiers,—a man with no political faith, hope, or charity. . . . If France is to have a future, and grow into a firmer texture of restraint and resolve, her first necessity, after the exigency of the moment is satisfied, will be to put at the head of affairs some statesman of deeper faith and character, of steadier purpose, and of less twinkling intelligence than M. Thiers.⁵

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 20, 1871.

² *Mail*, Feb. 21, 1871.

³ *Standard*, Feb. 20, 1871.

⁴ *Times*, Feb. 20, 21, 1871.

⁵ *Spectator*, Feb. 25, 1871.

Even *Punch*, that declared exuberant delight at the elevation of a fellow author, showed uncertainty as to what title should be used in greeting him.

Whether the new Sovereign is to be the President, Vice Consul or Emperor, Mr. Punch respectfully salutes him, and hastens to recognize the Dynasty. His Majesty has waited long for the Crown—but “the world is to him who knows how to wait”—and to work. The new sovereign’s health in a bottle—aye of Bordeaux! ¹

It was a hearty greeting, but a sure and safe one. It was, withal, appropriate. The new head of the Executive opened his career by stating that all constitutional questions must await the peace for their solution. The words, *la Republique*, were struck out of all public acts. Foreign ambassadors were accredited simply to *la France*.²

On the day that this somewhat equivocal Government was inaugurated, the diplomatic correspondence,—or that portion of it which Granville considered harmless,—was laid before Parliament. The papers were those referring to the Black Sea matter and to the conduct of the Government toward the belligerents.

It afforded to the *Times* and the *News*³ another opportunity for commending the Foreign Office for its sagacity. Lord Granville’s despatch of January the twentieth, suggesting to Germany the propriety of declaring its terms of peace, seemed to these papers, to show that the Government was possessed of boldness in a comfortably sufficient quantity. The *Saturday Review* was equally laudatory. It thought the British attitude contrasted very favourably with the illogic shown by the French and the harshness shown by the

¹ *Punch*, Feb. 25, 1871.

² *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 23, 1871.

³ Issues of Feb. 14, 1871.

Germans.¹ The Government had, also, the suffrage of the *Economist*, which praised it as having done all that logically was possible. Statesmen, it argued, should not favour intervention, unless there was certainty that it could be effective. The leaders of the belligerent nations had been intent on a quarrel,—and designedly had precipitated war by a “false report of a fabricated insult.” The struggle had been one of national jealousy, and an intrusive attempt at mediation would have only widened its scope and increased its intensity.²

Pall Mall, after studying the Blue Book, was able to concede only a “regretful acquiescence” to the Government’s policy.³ The *Graphic*, though restraining itself from condemnation, showed even less enthusiasm. England, it noticed, in spite of repeated urging by other Neutrals to agree on a joint policy in the interests of peace, had refused to do more than facilitate the meeting of the negotiators. When Bismarck had declared Germany’s intention of annexing certain border districts, Granville had kept silence. In October, he had censured France for expressing her determination to refuse the victors a stone of fortress or an inch of territory. Not until January had he made the notable declaration that “if the war continued, if France became totally disorganized, a curse to herself and Europe, and Germany had no recourse but to seize and occupy vast territories filled with unwilling inhabitants, blame would attach to her for having refused, not the intervention, but the good offices of the neutral Powers.”

The *Graphic* doubted whether this, and later intimations that the treaty was a matter of legitimate European interest, had not been made too late.⁴

¹ *Saturday Review*, Feb. 18, 1871.

² *Economist*, Feb. 18, 1871.

³ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Feb. 15, 1871.

⁴ *Graphic*, Feb. 18, 1871.

A similar opinion was advanced with much more emphasis by the *Guardian*. "What Lord Granville asked from Germany in the third week of January, when France in her despair was already resolved on negotiating without the aid of neutrality, might have been asked in the middle of last September with advantage. . . . Peace will now probably be arranged between France and Germany without England having a word to say in the matter."¹

The *Spectator*, after its manner of saying its say boldly, squarely condemned Lord Granville's policy from first to last. His neutrality had been not frank and fearless but timid and ostentatious. He should have recognized the Government of National Defence. He should have protested against the principle of the annexations.² The *Standard*, though equally displeased with this phase of the Government's policy, reserved its strongest denunciation for the despatches dealing with the Black Sea matter. No Englishman of honour, it declared, could read this correspondence without feelings of mingled shame and indignation.³

It was not to be expected that debate on the Blue Book could be confined to the Fourth Estate. Early in the session of February the seventeenth, the Government was questioned as to whether it had made any efforts to dissuade the German authorities from the projected march of their army through Paris.⁴ It was asked whether it had been apprised by its foreign representatives of a treaty between Russia and Prussia.⁵ When these questions were dexterously parried, enquiry was made of the truth of a report that French districts had been pillaged as a punishment for

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 15, 1871.

² *Spectator*, Feb. 18, 1871.

³ *Standard*, Feb. 16, 1871.

⁴ Interpellator was Baillie Cochrane, Hansard, *op. cit.*, cciv, p. 378.

⁵ Interpellator was Sir Chas. Dilke, *ibid.*, vol. cciv, p. 379.

the non-payment of fines to the invaders.¹ But the debate of the day was initiated when young Auberon Herbert rose to call the attention of his colleagues to the papers relating to the Franco-German War and to move a resolution for a direct change in Governmental policy.²

This son of the third Earl of Carnarvon was regarded as a visionary and something of a dangerous radical in politics. But it was admitted that he possessed whatever virtue there might be in sincerity. The veteran political journalist, Sir Henry Lucy, describes his honesty as having been equalled only by his undaunted pluck and almost womanly gentleness of manner. If he did not actually serve as the model for Mrs. Browning's hero in *Aurora Leigh*, the coincidence of likeness, Sir Henry thinks, was most remarkable.³ During the early part of the war he had been attached, with Sir Charles Dilke, to an ambulance of the Crown Prince's Army.⁴ But after the battles of Wörth and Gravelotte he had given his sympathy to France. The speech he rose to deliver was a condemnation of inactive neutrality, but it was made without bitterness and with the hope of effecting a change, not of party, but of policy. It was his belief that the other Neutrals had been discouraged from intervention by the stoical attitude of England. He repeated the charge that she had played toward France the part of a detrimental. He called attention to the fact that Italy, on August the twenty-seventh, had for the second time expressed a desire to unite with her in action; that in the next month the French representative in London had informed the Foreign Minister that various Governments sympathised with

¹ Interpellator was Mr. Goldsmid, *ibid.*, vol. cciv, p. 379.

² *Ibid.*, vol. cciv, pp. 387-396; *Annual Register*, 1871, vol. lxxii, p. 29.

³ Sir Henry Lucy, *Men and Manner in Parliament* (London, 1919), pp. 247 *et seq.*; biographical sketch in *Graphic*, March 4, 1871.

⁴ Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of Sir Chas. Dilke*, vol. i, p. 104.

his country's desire for an honourable peace; that Austria had repeatedly signified her wish for a stronger policy; that, late in October, Italy had again come forward in the belief that the time was ripe for Neutrals to draw up terms which they thought should prove acceptable; that efforts to rouse England had been continued by her, jointly with Austria, through December; and that these efforts had been eagerly watched by France. Her Majesty's Government had contented itself with performing certain small offices for the belligerents. It had passed on communications verbatim. It had performed the office of a whispering tube. He regretted that England had not sought to exercise a moral influence over the two nations, that she had not evoked the united voice of Europe for reconciliation. There was an international obligation, he believed, which no great Power could escape, and which none should try to escape. It was a thing wrong and inexpedient that Europe should stand apart in distrust and derision, and say no single word when a conquering nation was about to determine the fate of the conquered. He recommended the immediate moment as the latest opportunity for action. When Germany made known to Europe the terms of peace, it would become a matter of pride to her to sustain them. If the Neutrals were to do anything to moderate or soften the conditions, their efforts should be made at once. He moved, accordingly "that this House is of the opinion that it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to act in concert with other neutral Powers to obtain moderate terms of peace, and to withhold all acquiescence in terms which might impair the independence of France or threaten the future tranquility of Europe."

The motion, and the debate which followed it, occupy something like one hundred and seventy columns in the official reports, and brought to the floor fourteen Honour-

able Members. It cannot be said, however, that any new argument of consequence was added, nor that the original arguments were refuted.

The second speech was made by another of the Liberals, Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert, in phrases made pungent with the spice of sarcasm, denounced the Government for having reduced England to a policy of obliteration. His sallies at the Ministry's expense won laughter and applause, but they introduced an animus which Auberon Herbert had avoided. Sir Robert had recently visited in France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and Belgium. His desire to range afield was not exhausted. He now made verbal excursions into new matters, which provided subjects for fresh debates.¹ Unfortunately, he was imitated by others, and the House found itself listening to a discussion of the Russian abrogation of the Black Sea clauses; a review of British policy in the affair of Schleswig-Holstein; a comparison of the diplomacy of Russell, Palmerston, Clarendon, Wellington, Fox, and Pitt; and an appreciation of Cavour's work for Italy. Even the Alabama Claims were considered in some way to be germane to the motion.

Sir Henry Hoare, and one or two others of the friendly, did what they could to remove the original contentions from the obfuscations of verbosity.² They believed the motion moderate, and one that represented the wishes of the nation.

Its opponents, — and several who professed to be in complete sympathy with the spirit it expressed,—urged its withdrawal on the ground that it was inexpedient and unnecessary. Germany, they said, would not demand such terms as would endanger France and Europe. England

¹ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciv, pp. 396-408.

² *Ibid.*, vol. cciv, for Hoare, pp. 429-431; for Corrance, pp. 437-440; for Torrens, pp. 439-445.

should not, at this late day, and in an inadequate condition of armament, abandon neutrality. It was amicably suggested that if the Government make such an expression of their desire for a just peace, Herbert would be induced not to ask for a division.¹

Gladstone rose upon the hint. He answered the charges of Sir Robert Peel, and informed Herbert that his motion was inopportune, since, at that time, neither of the belligerents had expressed a desire for England's intervention. After referring to the hopes already expressed in Her Majesty's speech regarding the peace terms, he so far unleashed himself from ministerial restraint as to make the following involved and satesmanlike declaration:

Watchful I think we ought to be and should continue to be; and it would be a great and noble distinction for this country if, without allowing her sense of humanity to betray her into proceedings beyond her right, she could inscribe on the roll of her great deeds having been able to make some contribution, should the need arise, towards the mitigation of conditions, necessarily heavy and severe, which must be imposed on the termination of the war on one of the noblest countries of Europe.²

Debate had shown that, though there was much sympathy for France, the motion would be lost. Auberon Herbert contented himself with Gladstone's declaration, and did not press to a division.

Even in Liberal papers, pleasure was shown that the discussion had not been closed before gaining from the Government the admission that the terms of peace were a matter for England's watchful concern. Next morning's *Times* declared that the country, from motives of humanity, as well as from consideration for the future peace of

¹ Mr. M. T. Bass, *ibid.*, vol. cciv, pp. 445-446.

² *Ibid.*, vol. cciv, pp. 447-455.

Europe, should leave no pains unspared to bring about such a settlement as would be permanently respected.¹

For a long time, the British had had under discussion Germany's intentions toward Alsace and Lorraine. Gladstone, in the last days of January, had declared unofficially that he favoured their military neutralization.² Morier wrote that he was fearful that outright annexation would afford a permanent platform to the chauvinists of France.³ Frederic Harrison pled eloquently that, in the interests of civilisation, France should not be dismembered by Germany.⁴ Yet it must be conceded that time had somewhat dulled the dislike of the average Britisher for the annexation. The bravery and patriotism that the provinces had shown in the late elections for the Assembly revived somewhat of sympathy.⁵ But England regarded their vote as hardly more than a *beau geste*.

Discussion concerned itself more and more with the amount of the indemnity. It was the opinion of the *Times* that Germany would have done well to have regarded the gain of territory as so sufficient that she could be sparing of her demands on the French treasury.⁶ Such temperance would have been welcome in England for more than altruistic reasons. Conditions in Lombard Street were unsettled, and would continue so until the terms were known. France

¹ Cf. *Standard*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Illustrated News*, issues of Feb. 18; *Spectator*, Feb. 25, 1871.

² Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii, pp. 357-358.

³ Morier to Lady Derby, Jan. 5, 1871, *Memoirs of Sir Robt. Morier*, pp. 222-223.

⁴ Harrison, *Effacement of England*, *Fortnightly Review*, Feb., 1871, vol. iii, pp. 145 *et seq.*

⁵ Ludlow, *Reconstitution of England*, *Contemporary Review*, Feb., 1871, vol. xvi, pp. 499 *et seq.*

⁶ *Times*, Feb. 8, 1871.

had been a heavy borrower in England during the war and her creditors desired that she remain solvent.¹ *Pall Mall* feared that the imposition of a great indemnity would not only diminish the security of neutral lenders, but might push France into revolution.²

Not only in the matter of the indemnity, but in the projected march of the German troops through Paris, did the red spectre of revolution induce denunciation of the rumoured terms. For the pleasure of a promenade, it was feared, Prussia might provoke such tumult and slaughter as would make all Europe shudder. The *News*, the *Guardian*, the *Standard* and the *Telegraph* joined voices in its denunciation.³ The *Spectator*, alone, professed indifference. It saw something incongruous in regarding the Rue de Rivoli as a Holy of Holies.⁴

A French actor, in London at the time, has recorded in his diary how intense was the interest England was manifesting in the matter of the peace. One heard expressions of sympathy for France on every corner, and rumour had it that the Ministry was about to fall because of its inaction.⁵

The representative of the Government of Thiers arrived in London shortly after the debate Auberon Herbert had inaugurated on the foreign policy. He was the Duc de Broglie, grandson of Mme. de Staël, better known as a *littérateur* than a politician,—not the sort of a man to elicit or enjoy the welcome of a Republican Demonstration Committee.⁶ Lord Granville received him cordially, and within

¹ *Economist*, Feb. 11, 1871.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, Feb. 9, 1871.

³ *News* and *Guardian*, Feb. 18; *Standard*, Feb. 20; *Telegraph*, Feb. 23, 1871.

⁴ *Spectator*, Feb. 25, 1871.

⁵ Ernest Blum, *Journal d'un vaudevilliste* (Paris, 1894), pp. 252-253.

⁶ Cf. *Daily News*, Feb. 25, 1871.

the week granted him substantial proof of the Government's sympathy. De Broglie informed the British Foreign Minister almost immediately that Germany was demanding an indemnity of £240,000,000 and that France, in despair, desired England to ask for a reduction, and for a prolongation of the armistice, and a more open diplomacy in the manner of conducting negotiations. Granville summoned the Cabinet. It was decided that representations be made in regard to the indemnity. On the twenty-fourth of February, Berlin and Versailles were advised of Great Britain's opinion that in German, as well as in French interests, the amount demanded should be no larger than that which it was reasonable to suppose could be paid.¹

M. Gavard, of the staff of the French Embassy, has written rather contemptuously of the aid, which, at the eleventh hour, the "economic conscience of Gladstone" was induced to render France.²

It was a matter, however, of much satisfaction to the Ministry itself that when news of the preliminary treaty reached London, on the twenty-fifth, it was found that the indemnity had been reduced by £40,000,000. Gladstone, the day before, had sustained with little glory a very severe attack of Disraeli's in regard to the Russian abrogation. So sorely was he pressed that he had even pretended a belief that Odo Russell had been quoting Bismarck when he reported the famous conversation in which it was declared England stood ready to go to war with or without allies. The House had been vastly amused at his strategem. When he insisted that the Conference had been called to register a protest against the manner of the abrogation rather than to determine whether it should take effect, his colleagues had

¹ *Brit. State Papers*, vol. lxxi, pp. 192 *et seq.*

² Gavard, *Un diplomate à Londres* (Paris, 1895), p. 3.

shown themselves dubious.¹ The Government was in need of comfort and elected to find it in the reduction of the indemnity.

Viewed in their entirety, the Preliminaries could be expected to please only a most amiable Cabinet. Nothing better might be said for them than that they were not so harsh as the false terms with which the *Times* had created such a furore previously. The document which had obtained the signature of Favre and Thiers provided for the cession of all of Alsace with the exception of Belfort, and of a large part of Lorraine, including Metz; the payment of an indemnity of £200,000,000; and as guarantee of its payment a German occupation of the conquered territory. As a final buffet to French pride, Paris itself was to be occupied from the first of March to the ratification of the Preliminaries by the Assembly.²

It was impossible to believe, in considering such terms, that Germany had had regard for the British desire for moderation. In the press, it was said that Bismarck had offered the choice of the cup or the dagger. His demands were condemned as monstrous, barbaric, and diabolically provocative of war. England's laughter was gargantuan when she learned that the Emperor William, "with a deeply moved heart and with gratitude to the grace of God," had informed his Consort of their signature. He was rudely advised to modify his thanksgiving, since the two provinces he annexed would not long enrich the German Empire.³ Journals, that during the course of the war had expressed the most diverse opinions, agreed in regarding the Preliminaries as only marking the inception of a troubled truce.

¹ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciv, pp. 854-865; Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, pp. 134-136.

² Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. iii.

³ *Daily News*, *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 28, 1871.

The *Times*, the *Telegraph*, *John Bull*, the *Standard*, *Pall Mall*, the *Guardian* and *Saunders'* made themselves into a Cassandra chorus whose prophecies have, too unhappily, been all fulfilled.¹

Foreseeing such disaster, it is not surprising that, even with midnight striking for France, there were those who still urged the Government to forswear its lethargy. The *Times* reminded Gladstone that twice within the fortnight he had declared the terms of peace to be a legitimate subject of interest to Neutrals. It pled that the time had come when British envoys should be instructed to take action.²

The *Telegraph* prophesied that the world would unite in protest against so unmerciful an exercise of force.³ A famous stronghold of pacifism, the Cobden Club of Edinburgh, so far modified its tenets as to declare that under certain circumstances intervention was, not only excusable, but expedient in the interests of civilization.⁴

Several German papers feared that British indignation would be expressed so forcibly that France might be encouraged to renew the war.⁵ The *Record* claimed that Bismarck had so dreaded intervention that he had done all possible to shroud the terms in uncertainty.⁶ So far as England was concerned, the *Standard* assured the world, alarm was quite unnecessary. Liberal policy had reduced her to such a state of impotence that she dared not make remonstrance. She could only try, drearily, to look into the future.⁷

¹ Issues of last week of Feb., 1871.

² *Times*, Feb. 25, 1871.

³ *Daily Telegraph*, Feb. 27, 1871.

⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 28, 1871.

⁵ *Cross Gazette; Globe and Traveller*, Feb. 27, 1871.

⁶ *Record*, Feb. 27, 1871. France also was reticent. Thiers, on instructing de Broglie to ask for England's mediation, informed him only as to the amount of the indemnity.

⁷ *Standard*, Feb. 28, 1871.

Of those that prophesied, perhaps, *Pall Mall* was the journal that saw events most clearly. The main object of the French home policy, it said, would be to raise up an army competent to cope with Germany's; the main object of its foreign policy would be to secure allies which would help the army to do its appointed work. All thought of lasting peace in Europe should be dismissed until the results of the war had been undone, or human nature had changed its character. Count Bismarck had said that France would certainly fight Germany again, and he had determinedly made the conditions of the future conflict as favourable as possible for his own country. It was his wish that he had spoken, as surely as it was his conviction. For the supremacy of Prussia in Germany depended on the political atmosphere being kept constantly charged with war. He had had his will, and Europe was reduced once more to a condition of political anarchy. Every state would do what seemed to it right and would exert its utmost endeavour to secure the protection that comes from strength.¹

But it is not good for a chapter to close in black despair. Search discloses opinion of a more hopeful tenour. The *Examiner*, which of all the London papers was the most constant in its praise of peace, hoped, perhaps from the very enormity of the peace terms, that Liberalism would be strengthened both in France and Germany,—that the people in both countries would become stronger than their rulers, and discover a common bond of interest. It was a very radical hope the *Examiner* indulged in. In spite of its tempered phrasing, it was a wish that the treaty be annulled by social revolution.²

But if the editor of the *Examiner* appears to have tinted his glasses to rose colour, by looking eagerly toward Red

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, Feb. 27, 1871.

² *Examiner*, Feb. 25, 1871.

revolution, no such outlook was responsible for the content of the "Sage of Chelsea." Carlyle rejoiced that vain and querulous France had come to ruinous defeat. "No event has taken place in Europe," he wrote of the signing of the Preliminaries, "that has pleased me better, and, for my own part, I expect that the results, which are certain to be manifold and are much dreaded by the ignorant English, will be salutary and of benefit to all the world."¹

¹ Carlyle to Alex. Carlyle, Feb. 28, 1871, Alex. Carlyle, *New Letters of Thos. Carlyle*, vol. ii, p. 277.

CHAPTER XVII

LENTEN MEDITATIONS

ON Monday, the first of March, 1871, the German army entered Paris. An Englishman, who witnessed the triumphal march and left a record of his impressions, has described it, so far as the Germans were concerned, as having been most humiliating. The soldiers, he said, were like animals in a Zoological Garden, to be stared and jeered at by a Paris mob. They were hemmed in by artificial barriers, and by armed sentries, who looked on all their movements with suspicion. Behind these guardians of the conquering army, a curious crowd watched, hour by hour, from all the streets that opened on the Champs Elysées and the Place de la Concorde. But no French person of self-respect, unless he had business in that district, let himself be seen there. It seemed that Paris had surrounded and besieged the Prussians. Either the Germans, thought this Englishman, should have gone through Paris, *côte qui coûte*, or they should never have entered it. Their sober faces showed they took no pleasure in this semi-triumph. They seemed homesick for the lands beyond the Rhine.¹

In London, *Fun* represented them as marching down the boulevards hilariously, loaded with looted clocks and watches, while war correspondents followed in their wake, furiously scribbling; there was a caged eagle that wearily

¹ John Furley, *Struggles and Experiences of a Neutral Volunteer* (London, 1872), pp. 365-366.

veiled its eyes to its captors' triumph; and in the van walked "Otto von Roses," leading a donkey on which the pious William was seated, crowned with a shiny new crown and carrying Metz and Strasburg in his bulging pockets.¹

But cartoonists, like poets, must have their license. And while there may have been some unseemly dancing about the statue of Strasburg, as the *News* reported,² it seems that, in reality, great care was taken to make the entry as little humiliating to the Parisians as was possible. Apparently, it had been designed for a practical purpose,—to hasten the acceptance of the Preliminaries, rather than to gratify a desire of the army's.

Viewed in this way, the affair was completely successful.³ On the first day of the occupation, the National Assembly ratified the Preliminaries. Two days later their ratifications and those of Germany were exchanged at Versailles. The German army had eaten its plum cake,—from which all the plums had been extracted—and soberly departed, passing out under the Arc de Triomphe with less of verve in all its ranks than animated the gestures of some Paris gamin of the gutters. Stockmar wrote to Morier that the whole affair was ridiculous. "I should not have had the courage to subject the army to such a trial," he added.⁴ He had not realized the magnificent discipline of the German troops.

Something less than a sixth of the delegates at Bordeaux failed to feel the sobering influence of the occupation and

¹ *Fun*, March 11, 1871.

² This account influenced Edward Dowden in writing *France and Prussia, Contemporary Review*, March, 1871; cf. *Letters of Edward Dowden and his Correspondents* (New York, 1914), pp. 49-50.

³ *Record*, March 6, 1871; *Times*, March 4, 1871.

⁴ Stockmar to Morier, March, 1871, *Memoirs of Sir Robt. Morier*, p. 246.

refused assent to the ratification. Victor Hugo and Louis Blanc were of these. The former chose to regard it as the execution of France,¹ and, it was reported, both had sworn to devote themselves to eternal vengeance. The *Times* recommended that eternal vengeance be indefinitely postponed.² There was a very general feeling in England that the hour for heroics was past. Victor Hugo and Louis Blanc, said the *Weekly Freeman*, had done nothing better than to lend the lustre of their names to dangerous designs of the rabble.³

It was M. Thiers whom London chose to regard as the true hero. He had been overcome with grief when he had announced the terms of the Preliminaries to the Assembly, but he had shown the utmost determination in urging their ratification. It was believed that, by his energy, the impossible might be made possible and the terms fulfilled.⁴

In the interval of their discussion, they had not grown in British favour. Indeed, analysis had shown them even more disquieting. "It will always be a distinguishing feature in the history of this struggle," said the *Graphic*,

that even peace and the exhaustion of one of the parties has brought no relief to men's minds, but rather deeper apprehension and a degree of uncertainty about the future which must seriously affect the welfare, not only of France, but of surrounding nations.⁵

All Europe would suffer, warned the *Anglo-American Times*. For France would become a conspirator with a strong incentive to a vicious act, and Germany would be the

¹ *Memoirs of Victor Hugo* (New York, 1899). Translated by J. W. Harding.

² *Times*, March 1, 1871.

³ *Weekly Freeman*, March 4, 1871.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, March 2, 1871.

⁵ Issue of March 4, 1871.

slave of triumphant militarism.¹ Very especially was the demand for Metz condemned. Its possession by another, said the *Economist*, was a menace to France. Where Alsace would be only regretted, Metz would be feared. "And we hate those we fear," it added sagely.²

From the increasing animosity shown toward the German Emperor and his Chancellor in British leaders and cartoons, it might be argued that fear was felt in the United Kingdom itself. "*Vae Victis!*" thought the *Spectator*, might very easily be changed to "*Vae Victoribus!*"³ And the *Sunday Magazine* violated a sabbatical calm by exclaiming, "What if next New Year's day should find us as this has found France!"⁴ Alarm came, not only from the terms of the Preliminaries, but from a telegram of the new Emperor's announcing their signature to his nephew, the Tsar: "We have thus arrived at the end of a glorious and bloody war which has been forced upon us by the frivolity of France. Prussia will never forget that she owes it to you that the war did not enter upon extreme dimensions. May God bless you for it!" The Tsar, forthwith, had assured him of the happiness it had afforded him to give proof of a friendship that he hoped would be of long duration.⁵

In the first week of March, Lord Granville was recommended by the press to take note of this interchange of courtesies. There was need for wary walking at the Foreign Office. "It is probable," speculated the *Guardian*,

that the gratitude of the Emperor William was evoked by Prince Gortchakoff's refusal to coöperate with Lord Granville. If, then,

¹ Issue of March 4, 1871.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Spectator*, March 11, 1871.

⁴ *Sunday Magazine*, March 1, 1871.

⁵ *Weekly Scotsman*, March 4, 1871; *Court Journal*, March 4, 1871.

there was a secret understanding between the two great Powers that Russia should play this part of holding the Neutrals back, and that in return Germany should help her to destroy the Treaty of Paris, it is evident that Count Bismarck mocked us when he suggested a Conference for the decision of the Black Sea question.¹

This was exactly the supposition that Disraeli had placed before the House. It added nothing to the prestige of the Government nor the comfort of the nation to find it implicitly confirmed. People were laughing somewhat uneasily at a cartoon in *Judy* that showed William with outstretched hands blessing the Russian bear,—a bear that had already possessed himself of the Black Sea trick.²

In *Punch*, the new Emperor was everywhere. The Heavenly Father was represented as placing the crown atop the Imperial helmet, setting his pudding before him at dinner, lighting his pipe, shooing away the flies during his nap, shaving him, and even offering to make his hair grow again in order to make him "truly thankful." Those who did not believe he was a pious hypocrite thought him a sincere fanatic, capable of causing hideous mischief in his attempt to carry on the mission of Prussia. The sick and wounded in France, and the impoverished peasantry benefited from increased subscriptions made to societies organised for their aid.³

Politicians, looking ahead to tomorrow, urged on their Government an increase of armament and alarmed themselves over the indemnity; statesmen, whose vision extended to years to come, concerned themselves with plans for new and stronger alliances; idealists, planning for an age they did not hope to see, evolved projects for the abolition of war

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, March 2, 3, 8, 1871.

² *Judy*, March 8, 1871.

³ *Punch*, Jan., Feb., 1871, *passim*; *Weekly Scotsman*, March 11, 1871.

and the founding of an international federation. It is a human habit making for survival, that even in the darkest periods there are always men who plan for a time of ineffable brightness. While Lecky was wailing that the world had been thrown generations back and there was no comfort, save in the "monkey theory,"¹ and while the *Standard* disconsolately believed that the promise of the Golden Year had again receded into the distance,² the inconspicuous Society of Friends was recommending, in modest pamphlets, the beauty and expediency of tenets that it had long been following.³ It cannot be said that it made many converts. England was impatient of the principles of John Bright.

In the early part of March, however, much interest was shown in a lecture delivered by Professor Seeley, which garbed somewhat the same beliefs in the phrases of politics, and suggested means for their attainment. It was the belief of this Cambridge historian that the abolition of war was not only desirable, but feasible. He did not insist that war was in all cases unwarranted, as was believed by the Society of Friends. Under the conditions then existent, he thought nations, at times, should resort to arms rather than submit to wrong. But he argued for the creation of a system which would render war unnecessary. Such an international federation, as was needed for this, would have to be essentially different from the system by which European affairs were settled by congresses of the Great Powers. It should consist of every nation that it was expected to benefit. It would need a complete apparatus for its own functioning, legislative, executive, and judicial, so

¹ El. Lecky, *Memoirs of W. E. H. Lecky*, pp. 90-91.

² *Standard*, March 2, 1871.

³ Cf. *Sunday Magazine*, March 1, 1871, pp. 21-22.

that it might be raised above all dependence upon state governments. It, alone, should have the right of levying troops. For individual states were as feudal lords. So long as they were allowed to keep armed retainers, anarchy was to be expected.¹

At about this time, there was published *Dame Europa's Apology*, one of the pamphlets written in imitation of the more famous parable by Pullen. It was distinguished from its fellows by a plan for the prevention of war. The Dame was made to propose that her school hold a meeting and elect five, six, or ten representatives to form a board of arbitration for the adjustment of future quarrels. This was to hear the evidence on all sides, calmly to weigh it, and give its decisions, from which there could be no appeal. If any refused to comply with its decisions, she advised that the school was to use all moral means to compel submission. These failing, the others should entirely isolate themselves from the transgressor,—refuse to communicate or buy and sell with him, in short, send him to coventry. It would be only seldom, she said, that strong measures would have to be used, for the fact of bringing the case before the board would gain time for the cooling of passions, for calmer thoughts to rise. Finally, she advised that they make war a thing of the past, to be abhorred, not praised.²

There was a nucleus of men across the Rhine to whom these ideas would not have seemed pure moonshine. Victorious Germany, however, was in no mood to listen to them. When Dr. Jacoby published an article, condemning the Preliminaries as exorbitant, he was sentenced, at once, to two months' imprisonment.³ In Berlin, there was regret that the indemnity demanded had not been greater.

¹ *Illustrated London News*, March 4, 1871.

² Pamphlet published anonymously.

³ *Manchester Guardian*, March 2, 1871.

The Germans would not have been so jubilant, thought the *Spectator*, had they realized they had lost the means of controlling the Government. "How much of the indemnity do they think they will get?" it questioned—"or anybody else, except, perhaps Herr Krupp, and other great makers of munitions for killing people?"¹

The matter was still proving of great concern to the practical politicians of the Ministry. Gladstone and Granville² did not believe that France would be able to bear the burden laid upon her. As for England, according to the *Economist*, whether its financiers subscribed to the French loan or not, there would be a great diminution in London of bullion. Great capitalists, like the Rothschilds, might be expected to subscribe and would remove such sums as would suffice to raise the rate of interest. What they removed would be retained by Germany, it was presumed, for military purposes. For a long time money would be tight.³

News of a curious project for a financial alliance between France and Great Britain has been brought to light by the publication of the correspondence that took place between Thiers and de Broglie in the early days of March. England, the envoy wrote his chief, was greatly disturbed over the amount Germany had demanded. She was disquieted because the capital, called in from London and other financial centres, would go to swell the war chests of Berlin. On the day after his arrival, he had been visited by a high official of the Government, who had laid before him a plan so carefully elaborated that he believed it must have emanated originally from a member of the Cabinet. According to its

¹ *Spectator*, March 4, 1871.

² Granville to Lyons, March 1, 1871, Newton, *Life of Lord Lyons*, vol. i, p. 373.

³ *Economist*, March 4, 1871; *Illustrated London News*, March 18, 1871.

provisions, the British Government would itself borrow a part of the sum agreed on as the first payment, and would lend it to France on the same terms on which it had been borrowed. This not only would ensure to France a lower interest than she could expect to negotiate of herself, but would increase her prestige by showing that England stood ready to associate herself, to this extent, in her engagements.

After the agreeable plan had been outlined, it was intimated to de Broglie that the recently selected French Minister of Finance, because of his ardour for protection and his opposition in former times to the Treaty of Commerce, could not be considered an appropriate Minister for a State, sensible to the benefits of an alliance that might be founded on the basis of finance. This conversation was reported at once to Thiers, together with de Broglie's reasons for believing his visitor had been the intermediary of Gladstone. But the envoy observed that Gladstone was a strong mixture of common sense and ardent imagination, and was very changeable. His desires of yesterday might not remain his desires for the morrow.

Thiers gave the plan the approval to have been expected from a good financier. He did not intimate, however, that he would replace his Minister of Finance by one more favourable to the creed of Cobden. He informed de Broglie that he had no wish to renounce the Treaty of Commerce, but that, with the agreement of the British Cabinet, he intended to effect a slight raise of the tariff. Whether this answer was not sufficiently reassuring, or whether de Broglie's visitor had really been without authority, this interesting plan was not carried out.¹ Individual subscriptions to the French Loan were made in plenty, but England did

¹ *La correspondance de M. Thiers pendant la guerre de 1870-1871, Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. xxxiv, pp. 56 et seq.

not herself go into the market to give the French the benefit of her credit.

The Government was busy, at this time, with its immediate concerns. On the third of March, Sir Robert Peel had a second time raised the question in the House of the absence of a British representative from Paris during the siege.¹ By limiting his attack almost exclusively to the "flight of Lord Lyons," which he described as unmanly and ungenerous, he had weakened his case against the Government. For culpability lay not in the Ambassador's absence so much as the lack, for over a month, of a consul or any other accredited representative to whom the British might have gone for aid. Gladstone found his arguments, if not judicious, at least spirited and provocative of irritating criticism from the press. The *Standard* reminded its readers that when the Diplomatic Corps in Paris had remonstrated against the bombardment, England had not been represented in the protest because there had remained no one to sign it but the Embassy's German porter. In commenting on Lord Lyons' consideration in having allowed the consul to rejoin his family, the paper remarked that the transaction would have been less gross had there been appointed someone to fill his place. For the matrimonial ease of that uxorious gentleman had been consulted with the most complete disregard of the residents, who were his peculiar care.²

A few days later, the House of Lords was enlivened by a motion of the Marquis of Salisbury, calling for the re-printing of the guarantees that had been published in 1859 and the addition of those that had been contracted more recently. The Marquis was of the opinion that England could not emulate the isolation of America since the "streak

¹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. cciv, pp. 1296 *et seq.*

² *Standard*, March 4, 1871.

of silver sea " was somewhat narrower than the Atlantic. He conceded, however, that he was amazed at how much had been done in that regard; for he had seen his country kept aloof while a former ally was crushed on the Continent. With the nations assembled in London to take council as to the political aspect Europe was to assume, he urged that it was timely for England to remember the guarantees she had been contracting for the past four hundred years, and to make adequate provision for sustaining them. The motion was unopposed by the Government.¹ It was not desirable that England should publicly declare political bankruptcy. It was a time, said the *Guardian*, when the old cry of "Perish Savoy!" should not be distorted by echo into "Perish Alsace and Lorraine! Perish Turkey! Perish Belgium."²

England was distinctly nervous. She had no wish to increase the European anarchy by renouncing any of her obligations. She was very eager for information as to how it came about that other nations had been emboldened to abrogate theirs. During the session of the seventh, Disraeli questioned the Government as to whether it was aware that a secret treaty had been contracted between Russia and Prussia before the beginning of the war. Gladstone briefly declared that the Government had not been informed of such a treaty.³ Two days later it received unofficial but detailed information on the subject from the *Morning Post*. In that paper the long suspected treaty was described as consisting of three articles, the last of which provided for the immediate entrance of Russia into the war should France

¹ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciv, pp. 1360 *et seq.*; *Manchester Guardian*, March 8, 1871; *Court Journal*, March 11, 1871; F. S. Pulling, *Life and Speeches of Marquis of Salisbury* (London, 1885), pp. 155-157.

² *Manchester Guardian*, March 17, 1871.

³ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciv, pp. 1501 *et seq.*; *Standard*, March 8, 1871; *Spectator*, March 11, 1871.

acquire an active ally. When the solemn Lord Carnarvon interrogated Granville on the subject, England's Foreign Minister denied any knowledge of such an agreement as that referred to in the *Post*.¹ But this was not the first document that within the year had been brought to public notice by the press. There was a suspicion that the information given out by the aristocratic *Post* was correct. The Government's affirmation of ignorance on the matter caused many to question the state of efficiency existing at the Foreign Office.

In the House, Sir Charles Dilke was annoying Gladstone by persistent efforts to obtain a place on the calendar for a motion condemning the Government's conduct in having accepted the London Conference. Only Gladstone's insistence that he was unable to discuss the subject while the diplomats were in session, finally obtained the debate's postponement. De Broglie wrote his chief that the little assemblage known as the London Conference was never spoken of without a smile. Granville, he reported, was uncomfortably aware of the ridiculous rôle he was playing and more than eager for the thing to be over. Thiers instructed his envoy that, under the circumstances, it would not be wise to make any representations to the Conference on the subject of the impending treaty. The British Government had evinced such respect for a *fait accompli* that nothing more could be expected of it, by France, than some futile form of remonstrance. Bismarck, he wrote, was already in a very ill humour because of the suggestions made as to the indemnity. He was saying ugly things of England and showing great irritation towards the French. To raise the question of the treaty in its entirety would give him the opportunity of claiming that France had negotiated in bad faith. He

¹ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. cciv, pp. 1603 *et seq.*

might see fit to suspend indefinitely the evacuation of his armies.¹

Theirs's account of the Chancellor's anger was confirmed by certain declarations that Bismarck caused to be inserted in his official organ, the *Correspondent*. England, he charged, was hankering after a diplomatic defeat that she had every reason to avoid. She was treating Europe as a theatre for the advancement of her interests. Her statesmen were amazingly inflated with self-made illusions, and they would show wisdom in not subjecting themselves to contact with solid realities. He was angered at proposals and motions that sounded like insults from her Parliamentarians. He believed that the mildness with which Gladstone rejected them afforded matter for consideration.² Evidently, Bismarck was not in the mood to receive further representations. Equally evident was it that he desired that England know of his ill temper.

On the thirteenth, the Conference adjourned without having added fuel to the advertised Bismarkian fire. England's prestige had been in no way heightened by the presence of the long-expected envoy from France. Rather, Lord Granville must have felt shame at the contrast that was afforded to his own acquiescence in Russia's wishes. For de Broglie, though able to participate only at the last meeting,—and then as the representative of a defeated Power,—had made bold to say that the French Government saw no sufficient reason for a moderation of the Treaty of 1856 and would have preferred its maintenance.³

The unclimatic conclusion of the Conference was very harshly condemned by the press. Russia, it was noted,

¹ *La Correspondance de M. Thiers, etc., Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. xxxiv, pp. 59-78.

² Reported in *Standard*, March 4, 1871.

³ Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. iii, p. 1919.

had gained the consent of the Powers to the changes she had so violently demanded. The fact that she had agreed to the principle that no Power could withdraw from definite and valid obligations at her own arbitrary discretion seemed somewhat of a mockery. The Government was not allowed to take comfort from it.

"It is too ridiculous," said *Pall Mall*,

to boast of what was a technical expedient of absolute submission. A child who rebelled against physic might as well brag, with the spoon in his mouth and while the rod was held over him, that he had wrested from his tyrant an admission that 'twas only jam. If we must swallow the dose, let us take it in silence, in a manner more English and less French.¹

The *Globe* regretted that England had simply formulated a way for legalizing national unscrupulousness and international fraud.² In the *Standard*, the greatest scorn was expressed for the manner in which the Government had eaten its big words of the preceding November.³ Even a journal so sympathetic to the conclusions of the Conference as was the *Economist*, believed that England should have dignified her policy and contributed to future peace by having made some suggestion as to the periodical revision of treaties.⁴

It was not surprising that, during this clamorous criticism, Sir Charles Dilke should again have asked for a place for his motion. Gladstone resorted to a last means of silencing the persistent young Member from Chelsea. He told him that the proposed motion was nothing less than a vote of censure, the carrying of which would involve the

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, March 14, 1871.

² *Globe*, March 15, 1871.

³ *Standard*, March 14, 20, 1871.

⁴ *Economist*, March 18, 1871.

retirement of the Government. He asked if it was Dilke's intention to propose such a motion. The young Liberal accepted the Government's interpretation and still refused to give way.¹

If the Conference had proven so unpleasant an affair for England, it was recognized that discomfort came because her former ally had been, not so much a participant, as a sort of haunting shadow that could not presume to ask a crumb of comfort. It was increasingly urged that France must speedily be reconstituted, so that she could make her presence felt. England was glad when, on the sixteenth of March, a convention was signed for a progressive delivery to the French authorities of the districts under invasion.² A few days later hope receded. For it was learned that Paris had declared the Commune. As a consequence, the withdrawal of any German forces was countermanded. It seemed even probable that the invading army might come to be used by the Thiers Government in its own defence.³

There were not wanting in England men who could appreciate the reasons, economic and political, that led to the Commune. The dissolution of the National Guard; fear of having to meet the liabilities that had accrued during the war; the humiliation of the German occupation; distrust of Thiers and the absent Assembly, combined with the inevitable misery that follows a siege, had induced a despair that braved disaster to seek relief. John Richard Green was one of those who believed that Paris, in her first demands, had been reasonable,—she had asked only for the self-government possessed by every English town.⁴

But it must be admitted that, for the most part, England's

¹ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. ccv, pp. 53 *et seq.*

² Hertslet, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 1927.

³ *Daily News*, March 22, 1871.

⁴ *Letters of J. R. Green*, p. 288.

attitude was one of impatience. She felt somewhat as though she had bound up the wounds of a badly battered belligerent and provided him a crutch for support, only to see him straighten up and make a melodramatic attempt at suicide. She was divided between disappointment at Thiers (who, evidently, was not the stout prop she had supposed) and anger at the whole nation. Matthew Arnold believed there could be no hope until a new generation of Frenchmen had replaced the trouble makers.¹ The historian, Lecky, wrote in a private letter that the character of the people seemed corroded to the core and that all Burke's prophecies were about to be fulfilled.²

Thiers was looked to as the only one who could exert himself as saviour, and was exhorted and abused because he was not showing himself more heroic. A correspondent of the *Scotsman* wrote that, in Paris, they said his title was most appropriate. He had been appointed Head of the Executive Power in order that he might execute the Republic.³ When he showed hesitation in laying siege to Paris, there were those in England that believed he was trying to discredit the new Government in order to bring back the Orleanists. Others there were, who said that his hesitation was due only to weakness. Felix Whitehurst thought him too much of a weathercock to guide the destinies of France. He had had so many quarrels with himself, and had so often disputed with himself about his own political views, giving away often, holding out now and again, and changing like a chameleon that, thus late in life, he should not have been expected to pursue a steady policy.⁴ In *Once a Week*, the

¹ *Letters of Matthew Arnold*, vol. ii, p. 60.

² El. Lecky, *Memoirs of W. E. H. Lecky*, p. 91.

³ Dr. Rose Cormack, *Scotsman*, March 4, 1871.

⁴ Whitehurst, *Paris under the Armistice, Belgravia*, March, 1871, vol. xiv, pp. 89 *et seq.*

opinion was expressed as strongly as by the correspondent of the *Telegraph*. "M. Thiers," it said, "is probably the most time-serving politician that ever lived. Whichever way the power of circumstance pointed it has always been the manner of M. Thiers to bend to the breeze . . . clever, eloquent, equal to any immediate emergency, he has never had a principle."¹

In Germany, affairs were going more to British liking. The reports that such generals as Manteuffel and von Moltke had failed of election to the Federal Parliament were taken to indicate that there existed jealousy of the supremacy of the army. It was found that the moderate Liberals had returned a reliable majority. England, while wishing the path of Thiers to be velvet smooth, was well content that Bismarck should find his way blocked by the friends of constitutional government. Said the *Guardian*:

The Liberal triumph of the elections are only a premonitory sign that when they (the Germans) consider their position they will be dissatisfied with it, and resolve to free themselves from the overbearing supremacy which the military successes of Prussia have established.²

William's opening Address was variously praised as a model of dignity and moderation and derided as a presumptuous announcement that his great authority would regenerate mankind.³ But the speech of the Emperor was not so much of interest as was the fact that the people had indicated a distrust of militarism in the elections, and that in their celebration of the peace they were showing themselves calm and self-restrained.⁴ The British were hope-

¹ Issue of March 18, 1871.

² *Ibid.*

³ Cf. *Spectator*, March 25, 1871; *Guardian*, March 28, 1871.

⁴ *Daily News*, March 23, 1871.

ful of the people in Germany as surely as they were hopeful of the rulers in France. The more the Germans exerted their influence on the Government, the more would it tend to follow the lines of orderly constitutionalism. But the more the French asserted themselves politically, the greater would be the danger that their Government would deviate from the ways beloved by Britain.

Her interest in the regeneration of France was very near. The wish for a strong ally was scarcely greater than the dread of the effect of a France bent on experimentation. *Pall Mall* pointed out that Louis Blanc's residence in England had not been unproductive. His opinions appeared in many of the ideas most cherished by the workingmen. There was already a savour of the Commune in the constitution of every trade union.¹ The growth of Republicanism, manifested by so many of the meetings held during the war, had lately exhibited itself in agitation over the grant to Princess Louise of a dowry. It was very generally admitted that the single vote cast against the grant in the House was no adequate indication of the opposition that was being expressed without. The Queen had weakened her position by an over long retirement.² On the occasions when she had emerged, it had been to offer unpopular congratulations to the new Emperor and to make this unpopular request on behalf of her daughter. Sir Arthur Helps, in a letter written on March the twenty-third, records that of all the great people he saw assembled to go to the Royal marriage, Disraeli was the only one cheered by the immense crowd that gathered to see them off.³ The English were losing something of their love for a lord.

¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, March 23, 1871.

² *Spectator*, Feb. 4, 1871; *Evening Mail*, March 28, 1871.

³ *Correspondence of Sir Arthur Helps, K.C.B.* (edited by his son (London, 1917), pp. 305-306.

During the week a meeting of upwards of fifteen hundred was held in the Hall of Science, St. Luke's. Stormy speeches were made, and reports were read from Republican clubs in Birmingham, Nottingham, and other large towns. Mr. Bradlaugh was the speaker of the evening and carried almost unanimously his motion to form similar clubs in London. The last edition of his paper, the *National Reformer*, had been sold out. Another journal of similar tenour, the *Republican*, had greatly increased its circulation. An evening or so later, in pursuance of the project of this meeting, a body of delegates from the Radical Associations of London met at the Wellington Music Hall. It was resolved that an organization to encourage Republicanism be formed, and that an address be prepared to the country.¹ On March the twenty-fourth, Gladstone was asked in the House whether this meeting had not been of a treasonable character and what course the Government intended to take in regard to the offenders. He replied that there was no intention to take any steps in the matter. He had confidence that the "wrong and foolish opinions" embodied in the resolutions might be left to sink into appropriate oblivion.² Other republican meetings were held and various associations were formed, but the Government was not induced to deviate from its policy of indifference.

Evidence that it had no cause for alarm on the score of Republicanism, was deduced by the hopeful from the cordiality of the reception that was being accorded to an ex-Emperor. On March the twentieth, Louis Napoleon had arrived at Dover on the way to the Empress' retreat at Chislehurst. A great mob had greeted him and their shouting did

¹ *Tablet*, Apr. 1, 1871, *English Republicanism*; *Fraser's Magazine*, June, 1871, N. S. iii, pp. 751 *et seq.*

² *Hansard*, *op. cit.*, vol. civ, pp. 574 *et seq.*

not cease until he had reached his hotel.¹ But though the mayor had addressed him as "your Majesty" and many had shouted vivas for the Emperor, the warmth of his reception was due, not so much to respect for his former high estate, as to sorrow for an old friend of England's, who was thought to have been unjustly treated by his own country. According to the *Tablet*, the cordial, boisterous welcome was a sort of John Bull protest against kicking a man when he was down,—a rough way of declaring that in England it was thought sneaking to turn on a man when his luck had deserted him.² Napoleon was quite sensible of the character of his reception,—too clever not to know that it was due, in part, to a reaction against the success and severity of Prussia. When, a day or two later, the Earl of Malmesbury journeyed down to Chislehurst, he found him calm and dignified,—grateful for friendly good wishes, but reconciled to the fortunes of war. There were to be no more intrigues on his account in England.³

It was wished by many Parliamentarians, who were weary of the group that interested themselves in Britain's foreign policy, that Sir Charles Dilke might have learned from the distinguished exile a lesson in submission. More than two weeks had elapsed since the adjournment of the Congress when, at last, he succeeded in putting before the House the motion so long postponed by the Government.⁴ The occasion was remarkable in being the first proposal of a want of confidence that had occurred since 1864. Moreover, the vote of censure was being asked by one of the Government's own party. Sir Charles Dilke was very young to put a

¹ *Standard*, March 21, 1871; *Spectator*, March 25, 1871.

² *Tablet*, March 25, 1871.

³ Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an ex-Minister*, vol. ii, p. 417.

⁴ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. ccv, p. 894.

motion of such importance. But it was agreed that the speech in which he urged it was worthy of a mature statesman.

His purpose was not to discuss either the methods or the results of the Conference, but to deplore the Government's action in having entered it at all. This undue circumscribing of the issue enabled those Liberals who were discontented at the part played by Granville during the Conference to withhold support that, otherwise, might have been granted. But if the confines of his argument were narrow, the attack was, at least, forceful and direct. He showed conclusively that, though Gortchakoff had been induced by British requests to say that the Conference would not convene upon foregone conclusions, he had never withdrawn his original Circular, and had come to London secure in the knowledge that, with Prussia's aid, he could convert his unilateral declaration into an act of international obligation,—that he even would make it a point of International Law. Russia had accomplished her purpose, as her press proclaimed. She could have her fleets and arsenals on the Black Sea. The results of the last year of warfare in the Crimea had been done away with. The indecent haste with which England had assisted her in her endeavours, Sir Charles Dilke thought, was most culpable. Before his country had even ascertained the views of France in regard to the matter, it had instructed Odo Russell to accept Bismarck's proposition. This had been done although the Government knew that the proposal of a Conference had come from Russia via Berlin. By reference to the telltale index of the Blue Book, he showed that the Ministry had garbled the despatches with which it sought to justify its policy. In short, his argument was that through an exaggerated timidity, the Government had permitted the obligations of treaties to be publicly released. He pled that there could

never be peace until there was an adequate sanction to enforce international agreements, and that such a sanction could not be found except in the binding force of treaties.

One of the reporters has described his speech as a chain of reasoning from beginning to end,—“not the sort of speech likely to be efficacious in the House of Commons It was too closely and too subtly argumentative.”¹ Honourable Members grew weary and sought amusement in watching the orator’s movements. They were not impressive. He turned his body monotonously from left to right as if he were fixed on a pivot. The impression left was that the reservoir of his speech was ingeniously located in his boots and that he had, somehow, to pump it up.²

It was thought that there could be no benefit to France in declaring, thus late, that the Government had done wrong in negotiating at a time when Paris was beleaguered and was unable to be represented. It could only be an acknowledgement to Russia and Prussia of their triumph, were Parliament to record that Great Britain had knowingly consented to negotiate upon a foregone conclusion. To expend energy in condemning the Government for a Conference, whose protocols England stood pledged to support, seemed futile. As Bernal Osborne said, it was like flogging a dead horse. His speech, and that of the Under Secretary, won the complete approval of the House. Though the debate was long,—more than a dozen Members participating in it,—Gladstone did not need to defend himself. However, according to Sir Charles Dilke, the Prime Minister had exerted himself very efficaciously before the speech-making began. By presenting Sir Henry Bulwer with a peerage, he had robbed the motion of most able support.³

¹ W. White, *Inner Life of the House of Commons* (London, 1898), pp. 187 *et seq.*

² Sir Henry Lucy, *Men and Manners in Parliament*, p.

³ Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of Sir Chas. Dilke*, vol. i, p. 122.

Another of those who had accustomed the House to expect from him sharp criticism of the Government, surprised it on this occasion with a defense of the Ministerial policy. Sir Robert Peel delivered such a speech as the Members liked. He ranged afield, as he had done on a former recent occasion, quoted some "touching words" of Longfellow, and concluded with a sky rocket of praise for the Government's ability, discretion, forbearance. and good feeling. Disraeli, it was said, had come down with a great speech, for a first-class debate had been expected. But when he saw that it was dwindling away and would go out like a farthing rush-light, he refrained from adding anything of illumination by way of his famous verbal pyrotechnics. It is not surprising that, deprived of brilliant support and meeting opposition from unexpected quarters, the motion, which Gladstone would not allow to be withdrawn, was negatived.

The *News* described Sir Charles Dilke as an "unprofitable crotchettist." There was rather a general attempt by Parliamentarians to snub him as a presumptuous young man who had called Members down to the House on the eve of the Easter holidays to hear him express opinions on a matter of irrelevance.¹ No such objection could be raised to a resolution which was put forward the following night by Mr. Baillie Cochrane.² And yet the *Guardian* reported that there was general indifference and inattention when Mr. Cochrane rose to put his motion.³ Its object was to persuade the House to express a desire that the terms of the Preliminaries be modified through the exercise of British influence. But the speaker, whatever the initial indifference the prospect of a debate on foreign affairs produced, had a personality and presence that never failed to gain attention

¹ Cf. Bernal Osborne, Hansard, op. cit., vol. ccv, pp. 973 *et seq.*

² *Manchester Guardian*, Apr. 3, 1871.

³ Hansard, vol. ccv, pp. 980 *et seq.*

and sympathy. Furthermore, it was known that he was not ambitious for office. There was a belief in his sincerity.¹ On that Friday night he reviewed unfavourably the Government's policy in the exertions it had made to prevent other nations from allying with France. As a sort of palliation for a neutrality that had o'erleaped itself, he wished the Government to exert its offices for moderation while the negotiations were still in progress. England was in need of an ally that was strong and genuinely friendly. The impending terms left France miserably weak. As for her esteem, he reminded his colleagues that the vote of thanks for England, proposed in the Parliament of Bordeaux, had been carried amid shouts of disapproval by a majority of only two. He saw danger in the telegram in which the German Emperor had communicated his recent triumph to the Tzar and had thanked him for his great assistance. He did not like the Tsar's assurance of the pleasure with which he had rendered aid, nor his wish for further opportunity to prove his sympathies. An understanding was implicit. England was isolated. He denied that the alleged policy of peace had been either peaceful or safe. "It may be," he said, "a policy for a time cheap but it is not a truly pacific policy, if it is neither calculated to maintain the present dignity of this country nor the security of any in the future."

The motion was ably and briefly seconded by that friend of France, Sir Henry Hoare.² Gladstone, himself, replied.³ He rested his objection to the course proposed on two reasons: if England should endeavour to obtain some modification of the terms, she would gain no concession of consequence and would be placed by her efforts in the position of debtor of the dominant Power; second, her interposition

¹ *Vanity Fair*, Dec. 2, 1871.

² Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. ccv, pp. 1000 *et seq.*

³ *Ibid.*, vol. ccv, pp. 1001 *et seq.*

would forfeit somewhat of the independence of the Power on whose behalf she mediated. In the course of his speech, he surprised the House by admitting that the British Government had known all through the war that if Austria helped France, Russia would come to the aid of Germany. It was a matter on which the Ministers had repeatedly denied having had information. He admitted, also, the existence of that isolation, which, it had been charged, was the fruit of England's pacific policy. Since February, he told the House, Granville had known that, in any effort to obtain a mitigation of the German terms, England would have had to depend on isolated action.

Here was something for Honourable Members to take home with them and ponder on through Holy Week,—admissions from the Prime Minister himself that Great Britain, for all her fine phrases, had held aloof because she had known of a secret understanding between Russia and Prussia and, at the end, because the initiator of the League of Neutrals had learned that matters had so been manipulated that, should she have attempted to mediate, no single Power would have borne her company. Sack cloth and ashes and Good Friday prayers for Merry England! It seemed she had sacrificed her power, and vainly, on the crucifix of neutrality.¹

The first day of March had seen the ratification speeded by the occupation of Paris by a German army. By the withdrawal, on the thirty-first, of the motion which had elicited Gladstone's Lenten confessions, it was evident that, so far as England was concerned, the Preliminaries might be embodied intact in the final treaty.

¹ Cf. *Spectator*, Apr. 8, 1871.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE TREATY OF FRANKFORT

DURING the Easter recess of Parliament there was much discussion of the methods Thiers was employing against the Commune and of the disasters that might be expected, should they not meet with success. Whatever game Thiers held cards in was sure to be interesting, but it was complained that he was so secretive that spectators could make no guess at his intentions. In the matter of circulars, to be sure, he was as prolific as Gambetta. But when they had been discounted for their native *amour de la phrase*, there remained to them nothing. Splendid words were expended on the glory and honour of France, the valour of the Army, and the confidence the Executive had that in a few days—always in a few days—Paris would be brought to submission.

England believed that it could be reduced, and very speedily,—that the hesitation of Thiers was due, not so much to the difficulty of the situation, as to care for his own interests. A company of London Police, the correspondent of the *Times* has said, could have broken up the Communists easily on that famous day when Thiers departed from Paris.¹ The *Economist* believed the Chief of the Executive, by doing nothing, was doing what he wished in preserving a meticulous balance of power between the Army and the Assembly. He did not desire either of them

¹ Atkins, *Life of Sir W. H. Russell*, vol. ii, p. 235.

to be strong enough to shorten the tenure of his office by accomplishing an Imperial or a Royal restoration. The *Spectator* and the *Scotsman* both pronounced him an intriguer, who postponed the work of crushing Paris until he could make France believe that he, himself, was indispensable.¹

Meanwhile the world was informed by Thiers of the dissension that existed amongst the members of the Commune, of their pillaging, and the eagerness with which Paris awaited her delivery. The Assembly, he reported, was sitting tranquilly at Versailles, surrounded by the best army France had ever possessed. The *News* could not resist comparing those two perfect but somewhat static institutions to a pair of English commanders, who showed a similar valorous hesitation.

"Lord Chatham, with his sword undrawn
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham." ²

Sir Charles Dilke, who had returned to France immediately after his Black Sea speech, made a visit to Versailles early in April, and was able to see those reasons for inaction which the Circulars had obscured. He found that M. Thiers's reserves consisted of two hundred and fifty guns, parked in the Place d'Armes with no artillerymen to work them, and a Paris regiment, locked up in the park to prevent its joining the insurrection.³ On the second of April, and again on the eighth and ninth, the generals of the Versailles Government managed to attack certain outlying barricades by using battalions of the National Guard. They succeeded

¹ *Economist*, *Spectator*, and *Scotsman*, Apr. 8, 1871.

² *Daily News*, Apr. 3, 1871.

³ Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of Sir Chas. Dilke*, vol. i, pp. 125-127.

in occupying important positions, but news of their operations left the British cold. What was wished was complete success.

"Why in the name of humanity and common sense," asked the *News*, "was this tentative and worthless warfare indulged in, if the authorities were still looking forward to the time when they could act with some chance of success?"¹ A riot that could have been quelled with a small force had developed into an insurrection that skirmishes could only serve to aggravate. The *Examiner* complained that Thiers's half-hearted attacks were clearing the way for a terrible civil war that could not be staved off unless some faction should save France by executing a brilliant *coup de main*.² The *Economist* frankly favoured the elevation of the Duc d'Aumale.³ Certain religious papers, disdaining Thiers as too much of an agnostic to save France, divided their sympathies among the Prince Pretenders. Whitehurst, of course, in *Belgravia* and the *Telegraph* maintained his old loyalty for the Emperor.

Napoleon III had visited the Queen at Windsor shortly after his arrival, and on the third of April she had gone to Chislehurst to return his visit.⁴ Gavard, from his place at the Embassy, noticed jealously that the Prince of Wales and the Diplomatic Corps vied with one another in their testimonials of respect and deference to the Emperor, while the Ambassador of Thiers and his entourage were ignored.⁵ So closely was the residence at Chislehurst surrounded that police had to be stationed at the gates to prevent the crowds from battering them in. When the Emperor at-

¹ *Daily News*, Apr. 4, 1871.

² *Examiner*, Apr. 15, 1871.

³ *Economist*, Apr. 8, 1871.

⁴ *John Bull*, Apr. 1, 1871.

⁵ Gavard, *Un Diplomate à Londres*, pp. 27-29.

tended Mass, it was found necessary to charge a fee of admission in order to bring the number of the devout to reasonable proportions.¹ Associations of the Conservative Working-men of Deal, Sandwich and Walmer sent to him messages of sympathy, and expressed a hope that the breach between himself and France would soon be healed.² The excesses attributed to the Commune, distaste for Thiers and fear of him as a Protectionist, combined to vivify the memory of whatever good had come from the Emperor. *John Bull* whole-heartedly advocated his restoration and declared it was the only way of putting an end to anarchy and bloodshed.³ In *Temple Bar*, it was said that such an event would be most welcome to Bismarck, for the Chancellor was fearful of the influence the republic might have on his scarce made Empire.⁴

But it was admitted by all, except those most timorous of Republicanism, that the astute Bismarck had nothing to fear from Thiers. Under his guidance, said the *Spectator*, there would be established only a narrow-minded, reactionary, and very stupid Republic; one that would be as centralized as the Empire and possibly as corrupt. There could be no motive for the Chancellor to intervene except the rise of a new and most attractive Republic, which might exert a solvent influence on Germany itself. Thiers would see to it that *his* would be neither new nor attractive.⁵ Whatever might be said of the hesitation he was showing in attack, it was evident that he was determined to make no attempt to placate the Radicals by concessions. The *Evening*

¹ *Saturday Review*, Apr. 1, 1871.

² *Daily News*, Apr. 29, 1871.

³ *John Bull*, Apr. 1, 1871.

⁴ *Aspects of Paris after the War*, *Temple Bar*, Apr., 1871, vol. xxxii, pp. 91 et seq.

⁵ *Spectator*, May 6, 1871.

Mail, in commenting on the answer he had made to the mission of Parisian delegates, said that he evidently had declared war, not only against the Communists, but against their principles,—that he was incapable of seeing that there was in their demands a germ of truth that would serve to be cherished in the future.¹

In spite of the fact that news from Paris was scant and reached London only after it had been filtered through the censorship of Versailles, the attempts at negotiation made by this delegation and by the Republican League, and the Freemasons, succeeded in making known the minimum demands of the capital. It appeared that Paris was urging, with a reckless abandon due to her recent sufferings, no more than the right of local self-government. But it was apparent also that, could she establish that right, she would rule herself according to very radical principles that might prove contagious to her neighbours.

With the wish to break down, to some extent, the over centralization that was characteristic of France, England was in sympathy. It seemed right that Paris should lead the way in this. For it was recognized that it was peculiarly distinct from the provinces. Helen Taylor in an article in the *Fortnightly*, maintained that because of its cosmopolitanism, its extravagance, its disregard of morality, its abounding fascination for youth, it had become abhorrent to the provinces and, itself, was indifferent to their hatred.² Others viewed Paris only as a type of all cities, that in their restless feverish life must be antithetic to the slow conservatism of the country. The *Economist* described the struggle for supremacy as a combat between two different

¹ *Evening Mail*, Apr. 14, 1871.

² Taylor, *Paris and France*, *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1871, vol. xv, pp. 451 *et seq.*

ages of the world,—a feudal and a commercial period, each insistent on dominating the other. It prescribed a generation or so of evaluated education as the only solvent of the difficulty.¹ In the opinion of the *Graphic* centralization multiplied bureaucrats but diminished the number of men who were capable of dealing wisely with public affairs. The plans of the Commune, it thought with the *News*, might enable France to adjust her ancient quarrel with the cities and, at the same time, gain for herself a greater richness and security.² In an attempt to bring the problem home, the *Evening Mail* reminded London of the rights in its own possession. "Paris," it said,

asks to be governed by a municipal Council. Is not this the principle of the Government of London? It asks for power to regulate its own finances. Could any municipality pursue the way to bankruptcy more steadily than Baron Haussmann? It claims its right to regulate its own police. The city police is with us an institution carefully guarded by the city. It desires to manage the education within its walls. London has its school-board.³

These demands did not seem so atrocious that Thiers was justified in refusing to consider them. The *Telegraph* advised the Commune to lay down its arms, for its desires were reasonable and Thiers was so just that they could easily come to agreement.⁴

John Richard Green, though he had confidence in the cause of the petitioners, was less optimistic of their success. Thiers, he thought, had always been the ruin of France. He had always hated municipal freedom and had recently given new proof of this hatred by coercing the As-

¹ *Economist*, Apr. 1, 1871.

² *Graphic*, April 15, *Daily News*, May 8, 1871.

³ *Evening Mail*, Apr. 14, 1871.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, May 4, 1871.

sembly to refuse free election of mayors to all towns of considerable size. The fault of the Communal demands was not, as the *Times* said, that they were medieval and obsolete, but that they were before their day.¹ When a commonwealth of nations was once securely established, separate divisions within the nations could enjoy such freedom as was being fought for now. M. Thiers, Protectionist and nationalist, was not the man to anticipate the concessions that must be made in that larger day.

It was the temerity of the Communists in thus planning for a new order, when England thought they should have been setting themselves to the work of reconstruction, that lost them such esteem as the municipal demands, alone, would have gained. The *Examiner* might praise them for their championship of the rights of workers, their efforts to weaken the tie of nationality, to denounce sham and tyranny, and to oppose the militarism which Thiers was fostering,² but these endeavours lost them friends in England. Conservative British were alarmed that the chief offices of the Government had been assumed by workmen. They were fearful that the leaders of the urban artisans might attempt to impose their ideas on all France. Frederic Harrison, who was defending the Commune very vigorously, offended them by that asperity which admirers of other nations sometimes show to their own. The *Graphic* advised him that he was impractical, when he failed to see that his friends had shown themselves unpatriotic and selfish in attempting to make trial of their theories when their country was under invasion, and greatly needed peace.³ In the *Illustrated News* it was declared that by her reckless passion for experiment, France was supplying the vindica-

¹ Green to E. A. Freeman, Apr. 14, 1871, *Letters of J. R. Green*, p. 295.

² *Examiner*, Apr. 1, May 6, 1871.

³ *Graphic*, May 13, 1871.

tion of Germany. The frivolity that the Emperor-King had claimed was excuse for his exactions, was now made manifest.¹

It cannot be doubtful that some part of the anger shown to the Communists at retarding the peace of France was caused by impatience at their disturbance of British calm. Blame for the impetus to Republicanism, which had previously been meted out to the Government of National Defence, became a legacy, not of Thiers, but of the Parisians. Indications of its growth were all too evident. During the Parliamentary recess, Auberon Herbert, in a speech at Nottingham, had the audacity to advocate that the elective principle be applied to the head of the British state.² At a meeting summoned to protest because that unhappy candidate for matrimony, the deceased wife's sister, had suffered a fresh rebuff in the House of Lords, there was waved from the gallery a red flag inscribed with that mystic shibboleth, the word "Republic."³ It was supposed to be an intimation that there was yet a way to attain to long deferred desires. Mr. Bradlaugh was active and jubilant. He was as constant as a missionary bishop, in his visits to outlying Republican clubs. In his paper, he rejoiced that the enfranchised British workers had come to "a judicious resolve to prepare for an entire reconstruction of the basis of the British Constitution."⁴ Mr. George Odger was evolving a system of education for his countrymen that would enable those who still postponed this judicious resolve to hasten their decision.⁵

¹ *Illustrated London News*, Apr. 22, 1871.

² *Economist*, Apr. 15, 1871.

³ *Spectator*, Apr. 8, 1871.

⁴ *National Reformer*, Apr. 2, 1871.

⁵ *Manchester Guardian*, Apr. 10, 1871.

On the morning of April the seventeenth, the London papers were filled with news of a meeting of the International Democratic Association, which had been held in Hyde Park on the Sunday afternoon before. It was a very unimportant meeting, as the journals agreed, but it achieved the feat of provoking criticism out of all proportion to its size. The organ of the Protestant Episcopal Church told its readers that the meeting had been a miserable failure. It rejoiced that the spectacle afforded by the Parisians' outburst of atheism with its attending consequences of immorality and social disorder had acted as a deterrent to the respectable British.¹ The *News* confirmed this churchly judgment by declaring that the social forces which produced the display in Hyde Park had been not sufficiently deep or powerful to cause the most apprehensive of clergymen alarm.² The half-dozen red flags that gave colour to the parade, the Phrygian caps, and the band which played the *Marseillaise* "in a tune resembling the music drawn from a comb and a piece of tissue paper," all came in for ridicule. Hope was expressed by the *Telegraph* that when the French received the address which had been voted, they would understand that it had been drawn up by men unknown in London and applauded by a crowd on a par with the throngs that stop to see the combats of Punch and Judy.³ The *Scotsman* viewed the meeting somewhat more seriously. It was thought madness, but madness with a method in it. The pity was, it said, that there were certain men of character, intellect, and ability, who with pen, like Mr. Frederic Harrison, or tongue, like Mr. Auberon Herbert, were arguing, in spite of all deterring facts, in favour of France, Republicanism, and against the British monarchy.⁴

¹ Issue of Apr. 17, 1871.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Weekly Scotsman*, Apr. 15, 1871.

About two weeks after the event, the *Graphic* reviewed the comments of its contemporaries and added its own opinion of the significance of the meeting:

It will always be an open question whether the difficulty of knowing what's what has been increased or diminished by the circulating of newspapers. . . . What is the International Democratic Association, and what did it go to Hyde Park to do some Sundays ago? It was an assemblage of ruffians, said one reporter; while another, who referred with peculiar emphasis to the purifying effects of a certain shower of rain, hinted, also, that it was an assemblage of sweeps. Some gave us to understand that the meeting had been called mainly in the great pocket-picking industry, others that it was a mere compound of noodles and knaves. . . . Its members may be all that they have been said to be, but beyond doubt they are essentially earnest rebels against society in its present form. It is the war of the penny against the pound—the penny declaring that, for all his individual meanness, two hundred and forty of him are as good as one of his master any day. It is pain so desperately pushed for a remedy that it finds medicine in a quack's mere promise of a cure. It is poverty called together in a permanent sub-committee to "sit on" wealth, with three pence to form a quorum. It is ignorance defying knowledge to try a fall.¹

An old M. P., who wrote for the Oxford monthly, the *Dark Blue*, observed this, and other meetings with satisfaction: "We cannot talk sufficiently" was his belief. "Talk is better than suppressed passion, and talk brings our great men in direct contact with large masses, and maintains a continuous thread of mutual confidence." A Frenchman had asked him, in the past fall, what the British Government intended to do about the revolutionary ideas evoked by the proclamation of the Republic. He had answered that the Government would do enough by doing nothing: it would allow the people to talk.²

¹ *Graphic*, Apr. 29, 1871.

² *France Rejuvenescent*, *Dark Blue*, May, 1871, vol. i, pp. 353 *et seq.*

The Members of the House of Commons, when they reconvened the day after the Hyde Park meeting, showed their sympathy with the Ministry's policy of ignoring such utterances by forbearing to make mention of it. On April the twenty-first, Mr. Cavendish Bentick succeeded in putting a motion that recommended the withdrawal of Great Britain from certain obligations she had subscribed to by the Declaration of Paris.¹ He had hoped to have brought his resolution forward during the sessions of the Conference, but the Government had contrived to delay him, as it had Sir Charles Dilke. His motion was foredoomed to failure,—the British had no wish to rival Russia in the manner of abrogations. But it gave Disraeli an opportunity of stating again his disapproval of the Government's policy. It may be that the speech he made on this occasion was the one that he had prepared for delivery when Sir Charles Dilke's motion was received so shabbily as to have induced his silence. He stated, now, a very keen regret that the Conference had been held. "In the course of its proceedings," he said in large Parliamentary utterance, "we have registered the disgrace and recorded the humiliation of this country." He would ever consider the event of the Congress as "a dark page in the history of England."²

For the populace of London, it was a page long since turned. Whatever interest they had in foreign affairs centred in the struggle of Paris and Thiers. Bradlaugh, as President of the London Republican Association, was at this time in France, attempting the arduous rôle of peace maker. He was arrested by the Versailles Government, and deported from Calais. In the *Times* of April the twenty-fifth, he published the terms which he claimed the leaders in

¹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. ccv, pp. 1469 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, pp. 1496 *et seq.*

Paris were disposed to accept. They asked that the principle of Republican Government be accepted; that an amnesty be extended to all political offenders; and that an election be held in two weeks' time for the office of Chief of the Executive.¹ Such terms seemed singularly mild in view of what rumour said the Communists demanded. It was not believed that Mr. Bradlaugh's statement of the case was correct. The *News* told its readers that the Radicals had issued a new version of the Rights of Man which sought to disrupt the French nation by erecting a series of little city republics.² They had announced, too, their intention of destroying the Vendôme Column. This contemplated demolition of a monument erected to the glory of England's greatest enemy, strangely enough, aroused a furore of protest in the British press. It was zealously desired that Thiers would be able to capture the city in time to forestall such disaster.³

Early in May, news came that Paris had elected a Committee of Public Safety.⁴ To the English the name evoked sinister memories. They grew fearful for the safety of the Archbishop Darboy whom the Communists were holding as a hostage. They believed rumours that the Madeleine had been plundered,—that pillage and assassination were the rule.

Two Episcopal clergymen who were in Paris, wrote to the *Spectator*⁵ and to *Fraser's*⁶ reports that directly contradicted the prevalent impression. The article of one was not published until the first of the Eight Days that saw the

¹ *Times*, Apr. 25; *National Reformer*, Apr. 30, 1871.

² *Daily News*, Apr. 22, 1871.

³ *Era*, May 7, 1871.

⁴ *Daily News*, May 4, 1871.

⁵ *At Paris just Before the End*, *Fraser's Magazine*, Aug., 1871, N. S., vol. iv, pp. 230 *et seq.*

Commune's extinction. The article of the other was held over until August. Both accounts are free from horrors. The Commune, these clergymen said, kept Paris clean and morally wholesome. It managed its police, its schools, and hospitals remarkably well, and it so restrained the power of the generals that there could be no danger of a *coup*. Even had their testimony been immediately published, it would have had little effect on public opinion. To their discomfort, the two Anglican clergymen would, doubtless, have found themselves classed with Mr. Bradlaugh as partisan witnesses.

The British saw no hope for France save in the success of Thiers. In April, he had entrusted his forces to the command of Marshal MacMahon. It was reported that they had been allowed to occupy the positions north and east of Paris between the forts held by the Germans and the city's walls. Due to this concession of the enemy, Thiers enjoyed an important strategical advantage. For though for him the way of attack was cleared, if the insurgents had attempted an advance they would have been fired on as soon as they approached the German limits. During good behaviour, he could expect, too, to see his ranks filled by prisoners, who had been returned in accordance with the Convention of Ferrières.¹ But even with the odds against her, Paris, like Charles II, was an unconscionable time a-dying. The British were very impatient of the prolongation of the agony.

While the conquest of the French capital was being thus impatiently awaited, the Germans diverted London by a great peace festival, held there on the first of May. The orator of the occasion was Professor Max Müller. In the course of his address, he admitted that a slight cloud rested

¹ *Supra*, chap. xvii, p. 372

on the triumph of his countrymen because there had been found in England a party that hated everything German. There were even liberal and rational people who had grievously misjudged her. But he believed that the better part of England was friendly,—that the true aristocracy was hopeful of German success.¹

Professor Müller was to receive, very shortly, a severe test of the confidence he avowed in this sympathy for his country. Somewhat later in the month, due largely to his urging, Hippolyte Taine came to Oxford to lecture on Corneille and Racine. Townspeople and students could not do enough to show their sympathy for the distinguished Frenchman. Mrs. Humphrey Ward, who watched them crowding to his lectures, has written that they strove, by honouring him, to honour France.² There was no reason that the Germans should take comfort from the harsh epithets that were used to describe the Commune or from the criticism leveled at the hesitating Thiers. Both came only from impatience at whatever seemed to hinder the French recovery.

In the book stalls, there was displayed a new map, showing the future frontier that was to divide France and Germany. Its original was said to have been prepared by the General Staff so far back as the succeeding September. The territory cut from France was in the shape of a widespreading, thick-legged V, placed sideways so that its point was toward the east.³ Men regarded it with the curious horror which they might have shown an amputated limb that had been placed in alcohol. From the provisions of a bill, then under discussion by the Federal Council, they

¹ *German Peace Festival in London, Good Words*, May 1, 1871, pp. 489 *et seq.*

² Mrs. Humphrey Ward, *A Writer's Recollections*, pp. 153-155.

³ *Art Journal*, Apr., 1871, p. 127.

learned that Alsace and Lorraine were to be subjected to an absolute dictatorship for three years, and as much longer as Germany might deem advisable. Even the inferior offices in the annexed districts were to be filled by the soldiers that once had invaded them.¹

The second of May, Bismarck spoke to the Reichstag on the subject of the Brussels negotiations. Only in the *Telegraph* was he reported *in extenso*, though his statements were certainly interesting. One of them, made with ostentatious indifference, was that there were said to be ten thousand English fighting in France on the side of the insurgents. The *Era* observed, apologetically, that they were really Irish, and Fenians at that, and England hoped the number would be materially reduced before the siege was over.² The revelations, regarded with most interest, were in regard to the progress of the treaty. The Versailles Government, Bismarck believed, was protracting the negotiations in the belief that delay would increase its strength and enable it to get better terms. In a voice, meant to carry somewhat further than the Reichstag, he assured the Deputies that the French negotiators were mistaken.³ He had an excellent card to play against Thiers in his power of regulating the size of the Versailles forces by the return of the prisoners. At the moment, it pleased him to retard their return and to increase the army of occupation.

To justify his policy of incorporation, he admitted that Alsace was so thoroughly French that neutralization was impossible.⁴ Besides this negative reason, there was the

¹ *Examiner*, Apr. 22, 1871.

² *Era*, May 7, 1871.

³ *Standard*, May 4, 1871.

⁴ *Spectator*, May 6, 1871.

positive one of the strategical importance of Alsace. He regarded Strasburg as the very gate of Germany. The King of Württemberg had warned that so long as it remained a part of France his little state must be at peace with her.¹ Bismarck resorted, further, to a *tu quoque* argument of the type for which he had most fondness. He claimed that, in 1866, Napoleon had offered him the alternative of ceding Mainz or accepting war. When he had virtuously chosen war, the Emperor had retracted his demand, changed his Foreign Minister, and made a public declaration that it was to the interest of France to be friendly to Germany.²

If Bismarck expected that this musty revelation of Imperial iniquity would in any way mollify the British in the matter of the annexations, he must have been disappointed. His statements received scant discussion in the press. In Parliament, the usual negative result was obtained when an inquisitive member tried to gain further information from the Foreign Office.³ There was some curiosity, but no indignation. France was under a new government, and the futile threat attributed to her deposed Emperor had an interest only historical.

On the ninth of May, Lord Granville was gratified by von Bernstorff's concurrence in the amount of damages due the Duclair sufferers.⁴ The estimates had been submitted to the Prussian Ambassador almost a month before. His acquiescence was timed with more consideration for his Government's interests than for promptness. It preceded

¹ *Spectator*, May 6, 1871. Cf. C. D. Hazen, *Alsace-Lorraine under German Rule* (N. Y., 1917), p. 91.

² *Saturday Review*, May 13, 1871; *Spectator*, May 6, 1871.

³ Hansard, *op. cit.*, vol. ccvi, p. 269.

⁴ Bernstorff to Granville, May 10, 1871, *British State Papers*, vol. lxxi.

by a day the signature of the Treaty of Frankfort.¹ In a single respect, the Treaty was more lenient than had been the Preliminaries. A concession was made in the matter of the indemnity,—the only article in which Great Britain had attempted mediation. A sum of thirteen million pounds was deducted from the two hundred million, in consideration for the transfer of French rights in the Alsatian railways. An agreement as to the first payment stipulated that twenty million pounds should be paid within a month after the capture of Paris, and that Germany would begin her evacuation then by withdrawing the troops in Normandy. The signature of a final treaty was surety that the Versailles forces would be speedily increased by the return of French prisoners, and that the fall of the Commune would be hastened.

In London, it was rumoured that Germany had asked for a commercial treaty, but that the Protectionist principles of Thiers and his Minister of Finance would not allow them to consent to it. The *Spectator* regretted that, by the abandonment of free trade, the French people would have to pay, not only the indemnity, but a bounty to their own manufacturers as well. In Germany, as in England, there was fear that the burden would prove too great. But Bismarck assured the Reichstag that, were the payments not made, he would levy the taxes in a third of France, collect the customs duties on her Eastern frontiers, and requisition the people for the maintenance of his army.²

In view of the terms of the Treaty and of the spirit which dictated them, it is not surprising that the *News* found incongruity in that article which pledged Germany and France to everlasting friendship.³ The Communists, of

¹ Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. iii, pp. 1954-1965.

² Issue of May 13, 1871.

³ *Ibid.*

course, accepted the transaction with no such demonstration of Christian amity. On the day after the signature, they repaired to the respectable residence of M. Thiers and burned it to the ground. Within the week the Vendôme Column was laid low.¹

The Government of Versailles possessed itself of two barricades at Bourg La Reine, refused to receive the Delegates from the Republican Union who came to make a last attempt at mediation, and proceeded with its discussion of the Treaty negotiated by the Chief of the Executive. The debate turned, chiefly, on whether it was expedient to exchange some cantons near Luxemburg for others near Belfort. It was decided that Thiers was right in his contention that the strengthening of Belfort was more important than the retention of districts that Bismarck desired for their coal.² On May the twentieth, the Treaty was accepted. On the following day, ratifications were exchanged with Germany.³

Peace was signed. But there was no peace,—not in France where Paris suffered under the horrors of the first of those Eight Days that were to end in the triumph of Thiers and whatever he might stand for; not in Germany, where pride of arms had tarnished those fine ideals that can most surely give a nation happiness. There was no peace even in neutral England.

It is, and has long been, Great Britain's boast that on her little islands freedom of expression is far less confined than on the Continent. The grave forbodings that were felt in England were felt also in other lands, but England was the spokesman of them all. She does not seem to have been

¹ Issue of May 20, 1871.

² *Ibid.*

³ Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, vol. i, p. 302.

jealous of German unity, but rather to have feared that German unity had been made a stalking horse for the designs of Prussia. The traditions of the Hohenzollerns and of the nobility, who rendered them a feudal fealty, were not those, it was believed, that should shape the policy of the foremost Power of Europe. *Pall Mall* regretted that there was little hope that these would be modified by the Liberals. In the Reichstag, that party was showing the same acquiescence in the duty of implicit obedience that the Junkers held as virtuous. "They have yielded themselves such willing instruments to Prince Bismarck," said that journal, "they have clamoured so loudly for union and unanimity as virtually to resign the right of opposition altogether. The boasted unification is not, it seems, to be union, but subordination."¹ Labouchere, in his *Dairy of the Besieged Resident*, related an anecdote to show the sort of blind devotion a German was expected to feel for his King. When Jules Favre, he said, was negotiating with Bismarck, the latter spoke of Bourbaki as a traitor because he had been untrue to his oath to Napoleon. "And was his country to count for nothing?" questioned Favre. "In Germany," Bismarck had answered him, "King and country are the same."²

As for this Royal Family that was supposed in a mystic way to embody the ideal of the nation, it had shown itself neither peaceable nor trustworthy. It had established a wonderful system of education but it had preserved, as best it could, an ignorance of politics. The present King, said the *Westminster Review*, had no more than a drill-sergeant's view of the concerns of his kingdom. He had given over the leadership to his Junker Chancellor, a man as

¹*Pall Mall Gazette*, Apr. 14, 1871.

²*The Prussian Character and Germany's Future*, *Chambers' Journal*, Apr. 29, pp. 264 et seq.

able as he was unscrupulous. If the heroic Army would but remember the history of their country, they would know that they should not put their trust in princes.¹ For the Heir Apparent, to be sure, only admiration was expressed. He had managed, somehow, to keep his halo, even when his head was helmeted. But he would have to prove himself a saint, indeed, were he to withstand the traditions of Prussian leadership, once he had come to power.

The *Quarterly* believed that till the whole of Germany, yet unannexed, should be absorbed into the German Empire, one and indivisible, Prussia would remain insatiate and profess fear for her security.² In the *Diplomatic Review*, Urquhart warned that she would attempt to reestablish the Roman Empire, and that if the ransom of France proved insufficient to finance her armies, she would exact ransom of England, too.³ At Cambridge, Lord Acton told his classes that Prussian dominance was the greatest danger that remained to be encountered by the Anglo-Saxon race.⁴ "Who will be surety for Germany?" was asked in *Blackwoods*. "Who will say that greater and longer wars will not grow out of the war that has just ended, and involve the whole Continent in quarrels?"⁵ One of the correspondents who had followed her armies and had high admiration for their valour and noble qualities, believed that the dangerous impetus to aggression came solely from a passion for nationality. So far as Belgium or Poland were concerned, he

¹ *Westminster Review*, Jan.-Apr., 1871, vol. xcv, pp. 160 *et seq.*

² *Third Republic and the Second German Empire*, *Quarterly Review*, Apr., 1871, pp. 351 *et seq.*

³ *Third Roman Empire*, *Diplomatic Review*, Apr., 1871.

⁴ *Selections from the Correspondence of the first Lord Acton* (edited by J. N. Figgis, London, 1917), vol. i, p. 11.

⁵ *The End of the War*, *Blackwood's Magazine*, Apr., 1871, vol. cix, p. 506.

declared that Germany would not molest them, were Europe totally disarmed; but where she believed the territory was inhabited by Teutons, conquest would seem to her a religious duty.¹

Hope was expressed in the *Edinburgh*, that Germany, in a generation or two, might become a republic and adopt ideals that would be less disquieting to her neighbours, but of its own generation it expressed a distrust that was pathetic.

We are at a loss whom we can trust and with whom we can act, because, in a word, the system of European policy has been destroyed, and as yet we see no approach to a reconstitution of it. . . . Without mutual confidence, regulated and protected by public law, there is no security and no peace; and the most frightful and alarming symptom of the present state of the world appears to be that force rather than law, at this moment, governs the most civilized nations of the earth, that all alliances are shaken, and there are no longer any standards or principles of political action.

And all this, it believed, was the result of the policy of which Count Bismarck was the prime originator.²

The immediate reaction of England was a determination to increase her armament. What was done in this respect, how Gladstone succeeded in diverting something of the zeal for universal service into the carrying out of his project for the purchase of the Army from its officers, is a matter of military history that we must not stop for. But public opinion on the war cannot be mirrored without mention of a little pamphlet that was written to increase this desire for armament. *The Fall of England or The Battle of Dorking* had appeared, at first, in the April number of *Blackwood's*. Published separately, at the time the Treaty

¹ A. I. Shand, *On the Trail of the War*, pp. 199-203.

² *The German Empire*, *Edinburgh Review*, Apr., 1871, vol. cxxxiii, pp. 459 *et seq.*

was signed, it had a tremendous vogue. By the next December, its sale had totalled two hundred thousand copies. It was supposed to be the narrative of a British volunteer, who, some fifty years later, is telling his grandchildren the story of his country's great disaster. It is a very rambling narrative that is contained in the little pamphlet. Many repetitions have taken passion from the old gentleman's story, but his memory has retained all the vivid details of the days when England was invaded by the Germans. The trouble came, he says, from her failure to prepare for war. The Ministry had come in on a policy of retrenchment and hoped to keep the vote of those who decried military estimates because they were eager to reduce the power of the Crown and the aristocracy. With a precision of detail equal to Defoe, he tells why the greater part of the Army and Navy were absent from England at a time when Germany seized Denmark and Holland. How England ventured to oppose, and how she saw her fleet defeated and her territory invaded, is told in a style that is painfully realistic. Even at this late day, it is easy to understand how men could have shaken their heads over the story and been convinced that the fancied events might very easily have taken place.

England believed that she was entering on a new era. She was fearful of what it might bring forth. She had no confidence in her power to stop events. She distrusted the influence of a militant Germany and a resentful France. If we may be permitted to change the perspective and look from the present to the past, it will be seen that modern historians find, unhappily, a justification for her forebodings.

Charles Downer Hazen, in his recently published *Fifty Years of Europe*, discerns in the intervening period between the Franco-Prussian war and the world war, a certain tragic unity, born of the shadow of the past and the phantom of the future. "All the various streams of activity," he says,

all the different movements, national and international, social and economic, intellectual and spiritual, all the complex and diverse phenomena of the life of Europe during that crowded half-century took their form and colour largely from the memory of war, the fear of war, the preparation for war.¹

Carlton Hayes, in tracing the results of the struggle of 1870, has said,

The war fanned, rather than banked, the fire of mutually vindictive patriotism on either side of the Franco-German frontier. And it was this war more than any other single event which throughout the next forty years gave complexion to international politics, saddled Europe with enormous crushing armaments, and constituted the first link in that causal chain of circumstances that led straight on to another and vaster European war.²

Guglielmo Ferrero, more recently, has stated an opinion almost coincident, save that he extends even further the scope of consequence:

The war declared on July 18, 1870, really continued without intermission. . . . From the Treaty of Frankfort sprang the unlimited rivalry in armaments, and the diplomatic contest for alliance which resulted in the world war; both were simply desperate efforts to preserve by force a situation which force had created by imposing that treaty upon the vanquished.

And the tragedy has not come to an end with the world war—far from it.³

¹ C. D. Hazen, *Fifty Years of Europe*, New York, 1919, p. 1.

² Carlton J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Modern Europe* (New York, 1916), vol. ii, p. 203.

³ G. Ferrero, *The Crisis of Western Civilization*, *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1920, vol. cxxv, pp. 705-706.

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